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The Week

HITLER'S eagerly awaited address was the chief event abroad during the week ending February 2. Those who had hoped he would give a decisive yes or no to the French and British demands for coöperation were disappointed. He repudiated the war-guilt clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, demanded the return of Germany's lost colonies and promised not to seek other colonial territory. He repeated once more the Nazi doctrine that there can be no truce with communism and left the door open for war against not only the USSR but Czechoslovakia. . . . The trial of seventeen "Trotskyist" conspirators in Moscow ended in a verdict of guilty, as everyone expected. What was not expected, however, was the news that four of those found guilty would not be executed with the others. Radek, Sokolnikov, Stroilov and Arnold were given prison sentences. The American Committee for Defense of Trotsky plans a mass meeting in New York in protest against the accusation that he was implicated in the plot, and is seeking permission for him to come to this country to press libel charges against Communist periodicals that have so charged. . . . Bad weather in Spain hampered the fighting, the results of which were on the whole favorable to the loyalists. . . . A second attempt to form a new government in Japan was made with General Senjuro Hayashi as Premier. The army issued the statement customary under these circumstances, that it is not seeking a fascist dictatorship.

IN THE United States, the great flood which began in the Ohio Valley, the most severe ever recorded, continued the chief subject of public discussion during the week. The waters were receding along the Ohio River as the crest neared Cairo, Illinois; it will continue to move down the Mississippi for another two weeks or more. Already, the flood has cost 400 lives, done property damage of perhaps half a billion dollars and rendered a million persons homeless for varying lengths of time. . . . The deadlock in the automobile strike continued, with the General Motors Corporation refusing to negotiate until the sit-down strikers had left the plants. Efforts were renewed to force them out by legal means. . . . After many false promises, the end of the seamen's strike on the Pacific Coast at last really appeared to be in sight. The terms on which a vote was to be taken by the men constituted a substantial victory for them. . . . Four members of the Senate introduced another neutrality bill more sweeping than the Pittman plan which has the President's approval. The new scheme is based on the "cash and carry" principle. . . . The Federal Reserve Board, seeking to prevent a runaway credit inflation, raised the reserve requirements of the member banks by another 33⅓ percent. . . . Secretary of Labor Perkins suggested increased authority for the Department in labor disputes, including the power to subpoena and to examine books and records. The suggestion was opposed by, of all people, President Green of the A.F. of L.

THE European situation is changed in no important aspect by Hitler's long awaited speech of January 30, the anniversary of his accession to power. No one need have been surprised that he should have repudiated the war-guilt aspects of the Treaty of Versailles, and should have declared the Reichsbank and the German railways completely restored to government sovereignty. His declaration that Ger-

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many wants her colonies back, and will seek no new colonial territory elsewhere, was also in line with his previous declarations. When he urged that the League of Nations must be reconstituted, he was obviously talking for domestic consumption, and it is not surprising that his proposal went ignored outside Germany. The most significant part of his speech was the things he did not say: he did not promise to refrain from attacking Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia and the likelihood of such an attack still remains the world's most serious war danger. Germany will continue to rearm at her own pace, as everyone knew she would. Perhaps the thing in the speech that will be longest remembered is Hitler's childish refusal to permit any German to accept a Nobel prize in the future and his substitute plan for a series of annual German awards. These announcements would be entirely comic did they not reveal such a diseased and twisted mentality ruling the destiny of 66,000,000 people and through that rule, menacing the peace of the world.

AN INTERESTING development has taken place in British left-wing politics. The Socialist League, the Independent Labor Party and the Communist Party have decided to coöperate in a United Front. It is emphasized that this development is not hostile to the Labor Party but represents an attempt to push that party farther to the Left, and toward a more positive policy. The Socialist League has been affiliated with the Labor Party, and it was expected when the new action was taken that this connection would now be broken by the Labor Party. The Independent Labor Party entered the new alliance only with reservations. It continues to oppose the League of Nations, "collective security" and military pacts between capitalist governments. It still disagrees with the general foreign policy of Soviet Russia, although it supports the actions of the USSR in regard to Spain. The three groups together have made a statement of common policy. They seek unity in the struggle against fascism, reaction and war; want nationalized mining and the manufacture of arms; oppose the rearmament policy of the present government, and demand control of banks and stock exchanges to prevent gambling and private profiteering.

THE Electric Bond and Share system is, as most people know, a vast network of public-utility and holding companies. Its outstanding securities reach the staggering total of almost two and a half billion dollars. The system as a whole has refused to register as required by the federal Public Utility Holding Company Act, and a suit to force compliance with the law, on the part of the SEC, has been under way for more than a year. Many other utility holding companies have also refused to comply with the law, waiting to see how Electric Bond and Share came out. A few days ago Judge Julian W. Mack, in the Federal District Court in New York City, ruled that the companies in the system must register under the law. Judge Mack in effect held that the Act is constitutional, and that the publicity incidental to registration will "mitigate and perhaps eliminate" some of the notorious abuses which are all too familiar. Experts in this field believe that many other holding companies may now decide to comply (although of course final decision in the case rests with the United States Supreme Court). If so, a flood of new security issues, for refinancing, may be expected. We were interested to note that the extremely important news of Judge Mack's decision appeared in The New York Herald Tribune only on page 21, although when Judge Coleman of Maryland ruled that the holding-company act was unconstitutional, his decision was greeted with a huge display on page one. On page one of the issue carrying Judge Mack's decision, there were six news articles that no one could conceivably consider of importance. News is news, and isn't it wonderful!

NEW YORK CITY is in the midst of a long investigation of various aspects of racketeering, under an able young attorney, Thomas Dewey. The present phase of the inquiry includes some charges against labor unions, and the cry has promptly been raised that Mr. Dewey is just another tool of the employers, intent on smashing unionism under the guise of protecting the welfare of the city. Such a charge is an extremely dangerous weapon that should be used only with the greatest care. Every well informed New Yorker knows that in fact some trade unions in that city have been taken over by racketeers and operated in their own interest, with small regard for the welfare of the workers. The solution for such a case is of course not to destroy all unionism, but to help the legitimate organizations to drive out the illegitimate ones. We have no desire to prejudge the cases now being tried, but we would point out the great danger to the labor movement as a whole that is created if racketeers cry "persecution of labor" when an attempt is made to do away with activities which everyone knows do in fact constitute criminal extortion.

A PROVISION that would seriously hamper the work of congressional investigating committees was voted into the deficiency relief bill by the House of Representatives. The clause in question would prohibit the WPA and other relief agencies from lending personnel to congressional committees. If adopted by the Senate and enacted into law, such a provision would directly and immediately cripple Senator La Follette's committee investigating labor spies, which is being assisted by fourteen WPA workers; and Senator Wheeler's committee investigating railroad finances, which employs twelve WPA workers. Both committees are doing extremely valuable work and it would be a public loss to hamper their activities in any way. Whenever a really searching congressional investigation is proposed, particularly if it seems to threaten large financial interests, extreme pressure, both open and

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clandestine, is brought to bear on Congress to block it, so that it is always difficult to obtain adequate appropriations. Utilizing WPA workers and employees of other governmental agencies such as the Interstate Commerce Commission—both of which practices are forbidden by the new provision—offers a way to get around the difficulty. It is to be hoped that the fight to strike out this provision, now being led in the House by Representative Maury Maverick and in the Senate by Messrs. Wheeler and La Follette, will be successful.

THE dreary wheels of California "justice" have ground out another decision against Tom Mooney. After hearings occupying the better part of a year, the special referee appointed by the State Supreme Court, A. E. Shaw, has reported to the Court that the original Mooney prosecution did not use perjurers, did not introduce false testimony and did not suppress evidence favorable to Mooney. He recommends that the original conviction should stand. That any adult able to read and write could make such a report—particularly after hearings in which the whole vicious frame-up was riddled from end to end—approaches the limits of human credibility. It shows the strength of the determination of powerful forces in California to keep Mooney in prison regardless of the justice of the case. Now that the State Supreme Court has received the referee's recommendation, the next step is to set a date for legal arguments on the report, after which the Court will render its formal decision. That decision, as foreshadowed by the referee's report, now seems likely to take the form of a denial of Mooney's application for a writ of habeas corpus, upon which the present action is based. In such an event, Mooney would have recourse to the United States Supreme Court, to which he originally applied. The Supreme Court referred him back to California, saying he had not yet exhausted the remedies in the state courts. The order was couched in such pointed terms that there is good reason to hope that if California fails to right its own wrongs the United States Supreme Court may free Mooney, after a truly epic struggle for elementary justice.

WHILE the General Motors strike overshadowed other recent labor news, the next biggest current strike seemed to have come to an end on labor's terms. The seven Pacific Coast maritime unions held a referendum on the tentative agreements reached by the employers and the union officials, and it was almost certain that they would ratify them. Under these agreements all the workers will get a raise in pay except the longshoremen, who retain the old scale. All the unions except the officers' and engineers' will have full control of their hiring halls; port committees will be established to settle disputes. . . . The six-weeks strike of the Federation of Flat Glass Workers against the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company, affecting 7,100 employees in four cities, ended January 27 when the company granted a blanket wage increase of eight cents an hour and signed a one-year contract recognizing the union. Since the strike of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company was settled on a similar basis a week before, the glass supply of automobile plants should be back to normal in about three weeks, the time it takes to reheat the furnaces. . . . During recent weeks there have been ten strikes in textile mills, where annual wages per worker are estimated at $1,003. Three of the strikes have been settled with gains for the workers; two of the mills, Berkshire and Duffy Silk Company, have been out for more than two months. . . . A sit-down strike for higher wages closed the Cumberland, Maryland, plant of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company January 20. . . . Ninety-nine prison camp guards in Jefferson County, Alabama, announced they had formed a union and threatened to strike if any of them were discharged in the county "retrenchment" program.

IN THE New Republic of January 20, our Washington correspondent made the statement that the item in the federal budget for debt retirement is "more than $4,000,000,000." This statement was a typographical error made in correcting a line at the last minute before going to press. The sum should of course have been $400,000,000.

What Kind of Neutrality Law?

CONGRESS, in considering neutrality legislation to supersede that which automatically expires on May 1, is presented with a variety of proposals. In order to decide which of these are advisable it is necessary to consider what sort of things are likely to involve us in a general war, and how we may do our best to avoid such entanglement without attempting measures which will either be impossible to execute or will involve so much hardship that they will be likely to be repealed as soon as the shoe begins to pinch.

There are, in the first place, two major varieties of danger. One is that destruction of American lives, ships or cargoes by belligerents will start disputes about the use of naval power and arouse patriotic passions. The other is that war trade and finance will build up in this country a substantial interest in the fortunes of one or more of the belligerents. The possibility that such trade, once established, with all the profits and employment that it involves, might suddenly be cut off by the defeat of the customer or by the failure of his credit would furnish a powerful motive for this country to intervene in his behalf.

A complete embargo on all arms and munitions of war is of course obvious and simple, and is a part of all the proposals. But this is a relatively minor matter, since even in wartime the orders for other types of supplies far outweigh those for munitions proper, and almost everything may in the end be considered contraband. Another simple proposal

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is to prevent American citizens from traveling either in belligerent countries or in war zones. The present law states that they may do so only at their own risk, but it would be safer to forbid such travel altogether. This could be done, if proper provision were made for Americans abroad at the outbreak of hostilities who might wish to return. We could also avoid probable controversies about blockades, illegal sinkings and the like if we forbade ships under American registry from visiting belligerent nations or traversing war zones. This prohibition would involve some loss to shipping interests, but it would not seriously affect the economic welfare of the country as a whole, and the loss might be compensated if necessary without any great burden on the Treasury. The bulk of our foreign trade is carried in foreign bottoms anyway. These measures, taken together, would go far to eliminate possible conflicts about loss of American life or property at sea.

There remains the question of trade in such things as wheat and cotton, foodstuffs and minerals of all sorts, and manufactures that are not ordinarily considered munitions but still would be useful to a warring country. Completely to avoid the danger arising from such trade in wartime would necessitate an embargo on all exports. But this would be politically difficult. Such a law, even if enacted, would injure certain occupations and industries so severely that it would be in peril of repeal. What we really want is to avoid the development of an abnormal war trade and the consequent growth of a dangerous American interest in the fortunes of the consuming countries. It would also be well to eliminate the possibility of any controversy arising from the confiscation or destruction of even normal shipments after they had left our shores.

One proposal is to give the President power to limit shipments of this kind to normal peacetime quantities, applying the limitation at his discretion whenever the need might arise. At first this proposal sounds attractive, but it is full of difficulties, and would itself give rise to controversies both here and abroad that might prove unmanageable. The pressures against the application and for increase of the quotas would be terrific, and might prevent effectual administration. Even if these matters were firmly enough handled, there would be immense difficulty in distributing the quotas fairly among competing producers and sources of supply. The mere technical problem of working out quotas for the thousands of products involved would make the drafting of a tariff bill seem like a lesson in the alphabet. Seasonal variations in production would be almost impossible to allow for. Evasions would be myriad. And even if it were all worked out successfully, there still would remain the hazard involved in the transportation of American-owned goods past hostile submarines or destroyers.

A device better suited to meet these difficulties is the so-called "cash-and-carry" plan. This does not contemplate detailed specifications concerning what foreign nations may or may not buy with their money—excepting, of course, the arms and munitions that would be completely embargoed. It merely would require that whatever they bought must be paid for in cash f.o.b. the port of shipment, would there pass into the possession of the foreign purchaser, and would be carried in foreign bottoms. If combined with a law that any American interest in such goods could not be considered in our courts once the shipment had left, all danger of involvement would be avoided. And what belligerent nations could buy would be automatically limited by the amount of cash at their disposal. It would be up to them to ration their purchases according to their resources on the one hand, and their needs on the other. Their resources in turn could be limited by an absolute prohibition on loans or credits to belligerents.

Would this limitation be sufficient to prevent the growth of an abnormal war boom in this country? That depends, in part, on how much cash the belligerents could lay their hands on. Foreigners have in recent years built up large balances in American banks and large holdings of securities in this country. Belligerent governments would of course quickly find a way to possess themselves of these balances and securities to finance their war orders. The total of such resources is now roughly estimated at from $5,000,000,000 to $7,000,000,000. If it were all spent at once, a war boom would be quickly realized, while the throwing of such large quantities of securities on the market might easily disarrange our economy. Of course the belligerents would have good reasons not to do this, if they expected the war to last any great length of time. They would neither wish to use up all their reserves at once, nor to break the securities markets in which they would have to sell. Nevertheless some regulation in our own interest would be both possible and desirable. We could list and control foreign balances and foreign-owned securities in this country. We could in some way prevent more of them from being realized upon in any given year than would be sufficient to finance the normal peacetime amount of exports. This would be a type of regulation that, since it was applied at the bottle-neck, would limit war purchases in the most effective and simple way. A control of this kind could be strongly reinforced by regulation of foreign exchange. And it would not involve difficult discriminations by our government among competing business interests. Rationed in this way, the amount of cash available in this country to foreign governments would be sufficient to finance the normal amount of trade for the probable duration of a war.

In order to avoid difficulties which might embarrass this country in limiting foreign trade during a war, we should also have to consider the problem of necessary imports. Relatively speaking, we are less dependent on foreign materials and goods than most countries, but there are a few indispensable ones for which substitutes cannot be found. Preliminary in-

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vestigation indicates, however, that stocks of such goods sufficient to last for several years could be built up for a few hundred million dollars. Neutrality legislation might well empower the government to accumulate such stocks in advance of the outbreak of hostilities or as soon thereafter as possible. The materials could then be sold during the war to those domestic enterprises needing them, without any loss to the taxpayers.

These, in our opinion, are the measures necessary for the basis of an intelligent neutrality policy. They would eliminate most of the material and accidental motives that we have learned from experience tend to drive us into a world war. But they still do not account for the subtler psychological dangers. More thought is necessary to deal with these. We suggest at this time merely that the best psychological preventive of foreign involvement is a positive social purpose in this country that will help to keep our sympathies, our aspirations and our need for significant living at home.

Government and Automobiles

THE ATTEMPTS to settle the automobile strike have raised sharply the question what part government should or may play in the adjustment of industrial disputes. In the existing situation mediation has been ultimately in the hands of the Secretary of Labor. She has done her best to bring the parties together, including the highest executives on both sides. In reviewing her attempts, one is forced to the conclusion that the union officials have been perfectly willing to confer and to discuss all questions at issue, whereas the company officials have been extremely reluctant to do so. This has given point to the legislative program offered to Congress by Miss Perkins, giving the government powers of subpoena in labor disputes. When a great industry is crippled by a strike or lockout, surely it would seem that the public interest demands at the very least that the parties be willing to talk it over. The refusal to do this on the part of General Motors officials, no matter what the reason assigned for their action, does not fit well with democratic processes.

It must be remembered, however, that in labor disputes there are one or more underlying issues that are not arbitrable, issues that can be settled only by consent, by law or by economic force. Such an issue is whether collective bargaining with the union is to be carried on at all. The union cannot abandon its right to existence as a bargaining agent for the employees. The employer, on the other hand, may be fighting against this very right, as General Motors has traditionally done and is doing in this case. Once Mr. Knudsen or Mr. Sloan sits down in a room with Mr. Lewis or Mr. Martin to arrange about hours, working conditions or wages, the employer has in fact conceded the right of the union to exist and to bargain. This issue must be settled before the labor dispute becomes negotiable at all.

The government has attempted to settle it by law, first by Section 7a of the NIRA, then by the Wagner Act, but the first has run afoul of the Constitution, and the second might readily do so in such a case as this. In any event, General Motors, like other reactionary industrial concerns, does not intend to obey the law. Instead, it avoids bargaining, and uses other laws against the attempt of the union to force it to bargain by economic pressure. Can government either persuade or compel industry to accept unions and bargain with them so that this kind of industrial warfare may be prevented? That is the question here, which overshadows all minor and technical issues about the sit-down or other matters. The determined effort of General Motors to avoid genuine collective bargaining is the key that explains all its behavior.

The Presses Roll

ONE OF the signs that things in general are getting better in this country is the sudden burst of new periodicals. We have been doing a little intensive homework on them and can now report to our anxious readers on a handful of the latest arrivals.

Nearly everyone knows by now of the amazing success of the new Life, produced by that Midas publisher, Henry Luce, whose stable includes also Time, Fortune and The Architectural Forum. Mr. Luce's hysterical admirers had rolled up several hundred thousand charter subscriptions for him before the first issue appeared, and in the few weeks since then, the magazine has shot up to about three quarters of a million, though handicapped by the lack of presses. The reincarnated Life is a weekly collection of news pictures selected because they are startling or beautiful or gruesome—especially gruesome. The few words of text need not detain you long. It is a journal to be skimmed through in ten minutes, with no mental effort necessary, and the philosophers would doubtless say that its huge success is a characteristic revelation about this age.

Somewhat similar is Look, produced by the Cowles family, newspaper publishers of Des Moines, Iowa. Look is at present only a monthly, it is not an imitator of Life but a coincidence, and it aims a good deal lower in the social scale, with startling Sunday-supplement "revelations" and indignant moral crusades, including one against crimes committed by paroled prisoners. There seems no particular reason why it should not attain a large, unimportant circulation. A few days ago, all unsold copies were withdrawn by the publishers from the newsstands because many persons had discovered a possible (and of course unintentional) obscene interpretation of a picture on the back cover.

One of the amazing phenomena of the publishing business at present is the success of Esquire, which

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began with advice about men's clothes and has probably gained most of its large circulation through stories and articles by and for ostentatiously virile he-men, and by vast quantities of suggestive full-page cartoons, most of them in color. Out of their new riches, the publishers have launched Coronet, a fat tabloid of about 200 pages. The vulgarity is sternly suppressed; while Coronet goes in for colored illustrations quite as much as does its big brother, it tends toward pictures of old Chinese vases and reproductions of the work of little known painters of 200 years ago. Editorially, it seems to be groping in several directions at once. While it probably won't repeat the success of Esquire, it should be able to carve out a niche for itself.

The Commentator, which burst forth on January 20, is an attempt to cash in on the popularity of news broadcasters like Lowell Thomas and Boake Carter. Most of the well known practitioners of their profession are represented, as are many other popular writers for large-circulation magazines. The magazine contains a grab bag of almost everything, including an attack on John L. Lewis by George Skolsky that we wouldn't have believed possible if we hadn't seen it. The Commentator, like Coronet, is in the now so popular pocket size, to which The American Mercury also descended several issues ago.

Another new tabloid monthly is Events, edited by Spencer Brodney, who conducted Current History when that paper was issued by The New York Times. It is a sound and scholarly discussion of national and international affairs, with no particular bias of its own. If you liked Current History, Events is the sort of thing you will like.

Science Digest, which appeared with the new year, is another of the vast flood of reprint tabloids, all of which are trying in one way or another to repeat the amazing success of Reader's Digest (which now has a circulation of something like 2,000,000) although none of them is doing so. Science Digest is distinctly on the popular side, but should prove useful to persons specially interested in this field who do not care to read the original sources. The number of digest magazines has now reached thirty-nine, according to a compilation in the current issue of Tide. They include Current Digest, Digest and Review, World Review, World Digest, and digests devoted to women, health, the garden, etc. The tabloid size has also hit the pulp magazines, and we see Pocket Detective, Pocket Western and even Pocket Love—which is certainly something to think about.

The long heralded tabloid magazine summarizing best-selling books has at last arrived, not only one of it, but two. Books in Brief appeared first, and The Book Digest of Best Sellers followed a little later. Each of these monthlies will present in every issue ten or twelve best-selling books, quoting a few striking passages and summarizing others in a style reasonably similar, it is hoped, to that of the author.

The passion for digests has developed a new phase with the appearance of The Digest Year Book, an annual publication which in about 130 small pages undertakes to summarize some thirty of the outstanding magazine articles of the year, taken from periodicals all over the world, with a few books thrown in for good measure. Everything in The Digest Year Book has of course been published at least once before, in its original form, and some of the items have already been digested elsewhere in one or more of the many monthly journals of this type.

The question is often asked whether the multitude of digest magazines now on the newsstands does not spell the threat of disaster to the periodicals and books from whose pages their contents are taken. At one time, some publishers believed this would be true, and a few of them went so far as to refuse permission to reprint. The general experience, however, seems to support the view that the digests have created their own audience, without interfering with the circulation of the periodicals on which they are, to some degree, parasitical appendages. In several cases, books which had had but a small sale suddenly shot up into the best-seller class after being summarized in one of the digests with a large circulation.

For us, at any rate, the week's most interesting news about the publishing business has to do, not with a new periodical but an old one. The Literary Digest, edited in New York but printed in Chicago, is now sending a large part of its contents between the two cities by facsimile telegraph. The editorial copy, written in New York, is compactly typed and the pictured reproduction is in Chicago a few minutes later. It is set up at the printer's, made into pages, and photographs of these are sent back to New York by the same device. Here is another example of the startling technological advance which has already gone far in the field of publishing and seems likely to go much farther in the next few years. It may easily work a revolution much more complete than all the digest magazines can ever hope to accomplish.

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The Future of Relief

This is the ninth in the series of articles on various aspects of the next four years of American life. The concluding articles will be those of Bruce Bliven on "The Next Four Years in Foreign Affairs," and George Soule, "The Next Four Years—A Summary."—THE EDITORS.

FOR SEVEN years our thoughts and efforts have been fixed upon recovery. At first the attempt was made to conjure it from wishful dreaming. Then with a noisy display of false confidence it was hunted around corners. Eventually brought face to face with reality by the chastening effect of these failures, we undertook nearly four years ago to restore prosperity by the common-sense method of creating the conditions in which it can exist. We restored some of the lost purchasing power and gave it wider dispersion by wage increases, relief programs and other measures. We stimulated a demand in the heavy industries through a public construction program and the public encouragement of private building. We eased the debt burden both upon producer and householder. We strengthened the banking structure. We encouraged labor to achieve for itself a fairer share of our national income through organization. We should be neither surprised nor complacent to find these measures resulting in the evidences of recovery.

But as the indexes rise, people are beginning to question the nature of this long wooed and finally won "recovery." What is its significance, they wonder, in terms of those broad conceptions which we loosely corral in the term "social values"? What does an upturn in retail sales mean to the mill hand who still continues to find a miserable $10 or $12 in his weekly pay envelope? What hope do extra dividends in the major corporations offer to the wage hand in the cotton fields that his annual income will rise above its present average of $180 a year? And above all, what kind of recovery can it be that excludes some eight or nine million workers, still unemployed but still hopeful that our economy will at last offer some place for them?

During these seven years we have all had forced upon us at least an academic familiarity with inadequate wages, unemployment and a deficiency of purchasing power in our economic system. It would be naïve to assume that with the first burst of business recovery these would automatically disappear. On the other hand we may well consider whether we have taken full advantage of the opportunity afforded by the depression to repair damages and to ensure as much as humanly possible against recurrence of these deficiencies.

The year 1936 closed with a prosperity record generally admitted to be far better than most of the experts had predicted. Unemployment, among other things, showed substantial improvement, declining from an estimate of 11,687,000 in January, 1936, to approximately 8,000,000 at the end of the year. For the year the average was about 9,800,000 unemployed. The peak of unemployment in March, 1933, was 15,000,000. The improvement in the unemployment situation reflected by these figures is obvious. But the comparison between March of 1933 and the end of 1936 gives a picture of distorted optimism. If the 1933 average unemployment is compared with that of 1936, the figures are 13,176,000 and 9,800,000, a decline of less than 4,000,000 over the period. I think it is necessary to exercise caution in pointing to the improvement from the peak month in the worst year of the depression to the low month in the best year of the recovery. Such favorable comparisons are likely to lull us into a false feeling of national well-being.

The unemployment levels of recent years have been, of course, unusually high. But the problem of unemployment was not born full-grown during the depression period. It was growing for decades before this recent depression. Estimates reaching back into the latter part of the last century indicate a chronic condition of surplus labor. Unemployment reached a high average level of 4,500,000 during 1921 and averaged from 1,500,000 to 3,500,000 during the years 1920-29. The average was close to 2,000,000 in 1929.

Here we have the record in brief, as revealed by the available unemployment estimates. Unemployment has plagued all industrial nations from the time the industrial process took form. In this country the official attitude, until recently, was to ignore what was in reality a national problem. In fact, this country prided itself for refusing to give thought to unemployment and the needs of the unemployed.

What are the prospects for unemployment during the current year and for the more distant future? It seems clear to me that we will still have much unemployment this year. Average unemployment, I believe, will probably range between 6,500,000 and 7,500,000. But this reduction will take place only on the assumption of a return of industrial activity to approximately 1929 volume.

Why must we expect so large a volume of unemployment even with a return to 1929 production? The reasons are to be found primarily in the increased efficiency of the productive system over 1929 and the increase in the working population. Over-all productivity increased approximately 10 percent between 1929 and 1935, while the working force is 3,500,000 larger than in 1929. Together, these factors mean that to reduce unemployment to

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the 6,500,000 to 7,500,000 level would require a return to 1929 levels of economic activity. To reduce unemployment to the 1929 levels this year, national income produced must exceed the 1929 level by 20 percent. That would require an increase of approximately 45 percent over 1936 production and would, I believe, be clearly impossible. The best I expect for 1937 is a reduction of unemployment to a range of 6,500,000 to 7,500,000. As to the situation during the next six months, we may expect a reduction of approximately 600,000 in WPA employment, about half because of the ordinary seasonal increases in agriculture, construction and industrial employment and the other half on the assumption of a continued basic improvement in business. The requirements of national emergencies such as droughts and floods, or interruption in basic business improvement, would change this picture.

Unemployment is not merely a problem of the near future. It inevitably accompanies any highly industrialized and rapidly changing system. The minimum of unemployment even in prosperous years is generally conceded to be higher in the United States than in other industrial countries. The technological factors, the increase in the working population, the cyclical fluctuations and other shifts and changes in the system are operating at all times. Any guess concerning the long-term minimum unemployment under these circumstances of ceaseless change must be made with caution. Yet it is desirable to hazard such a guess in order to direct attention to the problem. In view of the sizable unemployment problem in the past and that of the present, I believe it is reasonable to expect a probable minimum of 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 unemployed even in future "prosperity" periods. And this minimum can be expected to be increased periodically with the recurrence of future depressions.

It is obvious that this unemployment problem is nationwide; that the causes which underlie it completely disregard local and state boundaries. And since it is a national problem it requires federal action to help mitigate the hardships arising from unemployment. The states and localities have not been in a position to do it alone and, since it is a national problem, they should not be expected to handle it alone. During a depression state and local funds decline for the same reasons that unemployment and relief increase. Individually the states and localities are not responsible for these difficulties and are not able to do much, if anything, to remove them. Unemployment is clearly a national problem and, for that reason, unemployment relief must be financed in large part by the federal government.

The relationship between the federal government and local authorities with reference to relief is not generally understood. Obviously, the Federal Works Program could not give jobs to all the able-bodied unemployed. First, it had no data on those who had not been certified for relief. Second, the money provided by Congress was not adequate to hire all those who *were* certified. The most that could be done, therefore, was to employ as many of the certified employables as possible with the funds available, with the result that a considerable number of able-bodied eligible people were left to the states, along with all those unable to work.

Here lies one prime reason why the WPA rolls do not go down more rapidly as private employment picks up. When a man on our rolls takes a private job, there is usually some other man certified as needy ready to step into his place. I want to emphasize that these rolls are never static; they are changing constantly, but this particular situation is governed by the fact that we have never been able to supply enough jobs to meet even the known need.

There is grave question whether this situation can be entirely changed in the near future. But as social-security provisions get into general operation, the burden of the states will be lightened with regard to various handicapped groups.

We have had unusual opportunities in these recent years. Our entire population has, to a varying degree, been shaken out of its complacency. Even the rich and powerful were rudely awakened from their smug acceptance of the complete and fundamental rightness of every element of the existing order. Insecurity brought them a vision of the doubts and uncertainty which are normally the lot of the poor. Middle-class people especially gained a new, if temporary, perspective, as the stability of their jobs, their homes and their savings trembled beneath them and even disappeared. New ideas and new solutions to old problems seemed less alarming under such circumstances. Economic and social theory was no longer ignored or despised as a remote classroom boondoggle. Moreover, in the individual insecurity of the depression, people of all classes began to look to collective action as a way out. This took many forms, but instinctively it involved a looking to the government. Business men looked to the government for relief from the pressure of their debts and the excesses of competition, farmers for a fair price for their produce, workers for a decent wage and the right to work together collectively for better conditions, the unemployed for some minimum of security, a livelihood, a job.

So in the depression we had the exceptional situation of a people looking to their government for relief from their problems with comparatively little regard to the form this relief should take. But with the first flush of recovery, many of those who enjoy its benefits find themselves weary of their contingent responsibilities. The very conception of change appears suddenly dangerous and radical. They are once again consecrated to the recapture of the *status quo ante*. They are bored with the poor, the unemployed and the insecure. They are relieved to cast off the unaccustomed burden that the depression has too long saddled on their conscience. They are tired as well of the government, except in so far as they are willing to devote their energies to the task of returning government to its historic role as police-

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man and guardian for vested interests. Take the government out of business, they say, and let business make its profits undisturbed! Take the government out of relief and let the unemployed return to the old tradition of looking out for themselves! Let not the historic role of the propertied be modified by regulation or taxation; let not the self-respect and initiative of the jobless be undermined by governmental coddling! The fact that many business men do not share these attitudes is encouraging.

If we are to be honest with ourselves, we must face recovery with the realization that many of our basic problems are still unsolved, and that a powerful minority of our population is no longer in a mood to solve them. On the other hand there are evidences that the larger and less articulate section of our population demands action on these problems. The election is the best possible evidence of that fact. The vitality of the labor and farm movement is another. The apparent support from many sources for a continued relief problem is still another.

It is probably inevitable that during the stress of the depression our energies should have been largely absorbed in the two immediate problems of feeding the hungry and returning our economic system to full "prosperity." It would also be manifestly unfair not to recognize that the majority of the measures adopted since 1932 have values that will extend well into the return of prosperity. Is it not now clearly our obligation to face honestly the problems that must be solved if we are to go forward?

There are two problems that seem clear to me:

1. We must so adjust the functioning of our economy that it will make continuously available to all of our population the high standard of living which our natural resources and our techniques make possible.
2. We must maintain peace internally and with the rest of the world.

These questions are not unrelated. There are those who maintain that peace and individual liberty are only possible in a country that has achieved economic justice. History is already giving support to the contention that the economic problems of any one country cannot go long unsolved without giving rise to international conflict and internal suppression of individual liberty. If we believe then in peace and freedom, let us devote our energies to the solution of our fundamental economic problems.

As to the first problem, it is apparent to me that our productive system, left to itself, does not provide a sufficient income to the mass of people to maintain themselves at the level that modern industrial development makes possible. This results in a situation in which an increasing proportion of the population is periodically denied all participation in its functioning. These are the unemployed. To a visitor from Mars the very idea of unemployment might well seem fantastic. That any portion of an ostensibly free society should be virtually excluded from the very processes whereby its members are fed, clothed, housed and otherwise supplied with the necessities and benefits of our modern life seems almost beyond belief. Yet, as I know only too well, this is the stark reality.

It is obvious that unemployment is not itself the basic problem, but rather the symptom of a far deeper difficulty. We will never do away with mass unemployment until we actively direct the resources of government and industry toward making more employment possible.

However, my job is with the unemployed and it is inevitable that I, like all the rest of those who during the past seven years have been concerned with the job of relieving their distress, should approach the problem in terms of its symptoms. Daily we ask ourselves, and we are asked, "What are we as a nation going to do about our unemployed?"

It is apparent that unemployment can no longer be regarded as an emergency problem. In the last several years we have had plenty of evidence of business recovery, but unemployment, though substantially reduced, is still of such proportion as to make it the most pressing problem facing the nation today. This fact in itself presents a puzzle to those who view our present recovery with a speculative eye. There appear to be two reasons for it. First, an increase in production must absorb more labor than we had popularly supposed to be available, if it is to reduce and eventually eliminate unemployment. It is estimated that nearly 500,000 new workers are being added to the labor supply each year. Moreover, there were many potential workers who had never worked and were therefore never counted as unemployed but who have since, for a variety of reasons, come into the labor market. And finally we have had a widespread but unacknowledged form of secondary unemployment, which, for want of a better word, we call under-employment. The man who works only half-time is one-half unemployed. All of this potential labor is available, more than that, is eagerly waiting to snatch up any reasonable job that is offered. But on the other side of the picture there is another reason. For the continuing advance of our technical knowledge and skill is constantly increasing the productivity of the individual worker. Our surveys show that from 1929 through 1935 there was a 10-percent increase in man-hour productivity. Fewer people can produce more, while there are more people to go back to work than we have generally assumed.

But this is no reason why these unemployed people should be asked to live as exiles in their own country, finding courage only in the hope that some day they may be admitted to the magic circle. Either a way must be found to admit them to participation in the economy of private enterprise or else they must be given a definite and respectable status as recipients of insurance benefits or as public workers. By this I mean that they must have the self-respect and the standing in our society that comes with filling an accepted function, and if at work, with creating a value for which they receive compensa-

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tion. No arrangements, necessary and good in their time but labeled "temporary" and "emergency" in order to preserve the unstable nature of our relief measures, will meet this long-time need.

It is clearly desirable that the functions of government should not be determined by the existence of a residual group of persons whom industry is unable profitably to employ. On the other hand, industrial leaders will have to consider carefully and to their logical conclusions the social implications of their actions in limiting production and employment, either through the fixing of prices or through the payment of wages to workers that are inadequate to purchase the goods they produce. If it becomes evident that private enterprise cannot make the most efficient use of all available manpower and resources, people will look to public services as a means of supplementing private employment.

Industry in this country must face this situation. Either it must employ the available manpower of the country, or, if this is unprofitable, it must be prepared to pay its share of the cost of unemployment insurance and the cost of employing some of these same men on public projects.

The adjustments that private enterprise would have to make in its method of operation as well as its thinking are far-reaching. These probably could be achieved only through the active coöperation of government and industry. Whether this could be accomplished practically, by mutual agreement, or constitutionally, by legislation, is problematical. The alternative is the extending of our unemployment-insurance legislation and supplementing it with a broad program of public works in the fields most socially desirable, as an established governmental activity not only to absorb but also to release the productive energies of persons who would otherwise be unemployed.

Today most of us hesitate to face this problem squarely and honestly. Those who have benefited by the recent recovery often find it convenient to forget the unemployed in the virtuous expectation that by this very indifference our economy will automatically provide for them. This forgetfulness has the double advantage of at once relieving these people from the financial burden of relief and from the concern for persons who they feel could easily get jobs if they tried. This, I believe, is the most dangerous temptation that our present recovery offers.

In the meantime, the government's work program must be geared to the realities of the relief needs of the unemployed. Neither statistical tables nor wishful thinking can take the place of the well documented files which give the name, address, age, sex, work history and the extent of need of every person now on the WPA. HARRY L. HOPKINS.

Willa Cather

IN 1922 Willa Cather wrote an essay called "The Novel Démeublé" in which she pleaded for a movement to throw the "furniture" out of the novel—to get rid, that is, of all the social fact that Balzac and other realists had felt to be so necessary for the understanding of modern character. "Are the banking system and the Stock Exchange worth being written about at all?" Miss Cather asked, and she replied that they were not. Among the things which had no "proper place in imaginative art"—because they cluttered the scene and prevented the free play of the emotions—Miss Cather spoke of the factory and the whole realm of "physical sensations." Obviously, this essay was the rationale of a method which Miss Cather had partly anticipated in her early novels and which she fully developed a decade later in "Shadows on the Rock." And it is no less obvious that this technical method is not merely a literary manner but the expression of a point of view toward which Miss Cather had always been moving—with results that, to many of her readers, can only indicate the subtle failure of her admirable talent.

If we say that Miss Cather has gone down to defeat before the actualities of American life we put her in such interesting company that the indictment is no very terrible one. For a history of American literature must be, in Whitman's phrase, a series of "vivas for those who have failed." In our literature there are perhaps fewer completely satisfying books and certainly fewer integrated careers than there are interesting canons of work and significant life stories. Something in American life seems to prevent the perfection of success while it produces a fascinating kind of search or struggle, usually unavailing, which we may observe again and again in the collected works and in the biographies of our writers.

In this recurrent but heroic defeat, the life of the American writer parallels the life of the American pioneer. The historian of frontier literature, Professor Hazard, has pointed out that Cooper's very first presentation of Deerslayer, the type of all pioneers, shows him a nearly broken old man threatened with jail for shooting a deer, a pitiful figure overwhelmed by the tides of commerce and speculation. In short, to a keen observer, the pioneer's defeat was apparent even in 1823. The subsequent decades that opened fresh frontiers did not change the outcome of the struggle. Ahead of the pioneer there are always the fields of new promise, with him are the years of heartbreaking effort, behind him are the men who profit by his toil and his hope. Miss Cather's whole body of work is the attempt

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to accommodate and assimilate her perception of the pioneer's failure. Reared on a Nebraska farm, she saw the personal and cultural defeat at first hand. Her forebears had marched westward to the new horizons; her own work is a march back toward the spiritual East—toward all that is the very antithesis of the pioneer individualism and innovation, toward authority and permanence, toward Rome itself.

The pioneer, as seen by a sophisticated intelligence like Miss Cather's, stands in double jeopardy: he faces both the danger of failure and the danger of success. "A pioneer . . . should be able to enjoy the idea of things more than the things themselves," Miss Cather says; disaster comes when an idea becomes an actuality. From "O Pioneers!" to "The Professor's House," Miss Cather's novels portray the results of the pioneer's defeat, both in the thwarted pettiness to which he is condemned by his material failures and in the callous insensitivity produced by his material success. "The world is little, people are little, human life is little," says Thea Kronborg's derelict music teacher in "The Song of the Lark." "There is only one big thing—desire." When there is no longer the opportunity for effective desire, the pioneer is doomed. But already in Miss Cather's Nebraska youth the opportunities for effective desire had largely been removed: the frontier had been closed.

"A Lost Lady," Miss Cather's most explicit treatment of the passing of the old order, is the central work of her career. Far from being the delicate minor work it is so often called, it is probably her most muscular book, for it derives power from the grandeur of its theme. Miss Cather shares the American belief in the tonic moral quality of the pioneer's life; with the passing of the frontier she conceives that a great source of fortitude has been lost. Depending on a very exact manipulation of symbols, the point of "A Lost Lady" (reminiscent of Henry James's "The Sacred Fount") is that the delicacy and charm of Marian Forrester spring not from herself but from the moral strength of her pioneer husband. Heavy, slow, not intelligent, Forrester is one of those men who, in his own words, "dreamed the railroads across the mountains." He shares the knightly virtues which Miss Cather unquestioningly ascribes to the early settlers; "impractical to the point of magnificence," he is one of those who could "conquer but not hold." He is defeated by the men of the new money interests who "never risked anything"—and the perdition of the lost lady proceeds in the degree that she withdraws from her husband in favor of one of the sordid new men, until she finds her final degradation in the arms of an upstart vulgarian.

But though the best of the pioneer ideal is defeated by alien forces, the ideal itself, Miss Cather sees, is really an insufficient one. In her first considerable novel, "O Pioneers!" she already wrote in an elegiac mood and with the sense that the old ideal was not enough. Alexandra Bergson, with her warm simplicity, her resourcefulness and shrewd courage, is the essence of the pioneering virtues, but she is distinguished above her neighbors because she feels that, if she is to work at all, she must believe that the world is wider than her cornfields. Her pride is not that she has triumphed over the soil but that she has made her youngest brother "a personality apart from the soil." The pioneer, having reached his goal at the horizons of the earth, must look to the horizons of the spirit.

The disappearance of the old frontier left Miss Cather with a heritage of the virtues in which she had been bred but with the necessity of finding a new object for them. Looking for the new frontier, she found it in the mind. From the world of failure which she portrayed so savagely in "A Wagner Matinee" and "The Sculptor's Funeral," and from the world of fat prosperity of "One of Ours," she could flee to the world of art. For in art one may desire illimitably. And if, conceivably, one may fail —Miss Cather's artists never do—it is still only as an artist that one may be the eternal pioneer, concerned always with "the idea of things." Thea Kronborg, of the breed of Alexandra Bergson, turns all the old energy, bogged down in mediocrity, toward music. Miss Cather rhapsodizes for her: "O eagle of eagles! Endeavor, achievement, desire, glorious striving of human art."

But art is not the only, or a sufficient, salvation from the débâcle of pioneer culture. For some vestige of the old striving after new worlds which cannot be gratified seems to spread a poison through the American soul, making it thin and unsubstantial, unable to find peace and solidity. A foreigner says to Claude Wheeler of "One of Ours," "You Americans are always looking for something outside yourselves to warm you up, and it is no way to do. In old countries, where not very much can happen to us, we know that, and we learn to make the most of things." And with the artists, Miss Cather puts those gentle spirits who have learned to make the most of things—Neighbor Rosicky, Augusta and, preëminently, My Antonia. Momentarily betrayed by the later developments of the frontier, Antonia at last fulfills herself in child-bearing and a busy household, expressing her "relish for life, not overdelicate but invigorating."

Indeed, "making the most of things" becomes even more important to Miss Cather than the eternal striving of art. For, she implies, in our civilization even the best ideals are bound to corruption. "The Professor's House" is the novel in which she brings the failure of the pioneer spirit into the wider field of American life. Lame as it is, it epitomizes as well as any novel of our time the disgust with life which so many sensitive Americans feel, which makes them dream of their pre-adolescent integration and innocent community with nature, speculate on the "release from effort" and the "eternal solitude" of death, and eventually reconcile themselves to a life "without delight." Three stories

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of betrayal are interwoven in this novel: the success of Professor St. Peter's history of the Spanish explorers which tears him away from the frontier of his uncomfortable and ugly old study to set him up in an elegant but stifling new home; the sale to a foreign collector of the dead Tom Outland's Indian relics which had made his spiritual heritage; and the commercialization of Outland's scientific discovery with its subsequent corruption of the Professor's charming family. With all of life contaminated by the rotting of admirable desires, only Augusta, the unquesting and unquestioning German Catholic seamstress, stands secure and sound.

Not the pioneering philosophy alone, but the whole poetic romanticism of the nineteenth century had been suffused by the belief that the struggle rather than the prize was admirable, that a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for? Having seen the insufficiency of this philosophy Miss Cather must find another in which the goal shall be more than the search. She finds it, expectably enough, in religion. The Catholicism to which she turns is a Catholicism of culture, not of doctrine. The ideal of unremitting search, it may be said, is essentially a Protestant notion; Catholic thought tends to repudiate the ineluctable and to seek the sharply defined. The quest for Moby Dick, that dangerous beast, is Protestant; the Catholic tradition selects what it can make immediate and tangible in symbol and Miss Cather turns to the way of life that "makes the most of things," to the old settled cultures. She attaches a mystical significance to the ritual of the ordered life, to the niceties of cookery, to the supernal virtues of *things* themselves—sherry, or lettuce, or "these coppers, big and little, these brooms and clouts and brushes" which are the tools for making life itself. And with a religious ideal one may safely be a pioneer. The two priests of "Death Comes for the Archbishop" are pioneers; they happen to be successful in their enterprise, but they could not have been frustrated, Miss Cather implies, because the worth of their goal is indisputable.

From the first of her novels the Church had occupied a special and gracious place in Willa Cather's mind. She now thinks with increasing eloquence of its permanence and certainty and of "the universal human yearning for something permanent, enduring, without shadow of change." The Rock becomes her often repeated symbol: "the rock, when one comes to think of it, was the utmost expression of human need." For the Church seems to offer the possibility of satisfying that appealing definition of human happiness which Miss Cather had made as far back as "My Antonia"—"to be dissolved in something complete and great," "to become a part of something entire, whether it is sun and air, goodness and knowledge."

It is toward that dissolvement that Miss Cather is always striving. She achieves it with the "sun and air"—and perhaps few modern writers have been so successful with landscape. She can find it in goodness and in society—but only if they have the feudal constriction of the old Quebec of "Shadows on the Rock." Nothing in modern life, no possibility, no hope, offers it to her. She conceives, as she says in the prefatory note to her volume of essays, "Not Under Forty," that the world "broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts" and she numbers herself among the "backward," unaware that even so self-conscious and defiant a rejection of her own time must make her talent increasingly irrelevant and tangential—for any time.

"The early pioneer was an individualist and a seeker after the undiscovered," says F. J. Turner, "but he did not understand the richness and complexity of life as a whole." Though Miss Cather in all her work has recognized this lack of understanding of complexity and wholeness, and has attempted to transcend it, she ends, ironically enough, in a fancier but no less restricted provincialism than the one she sought to escape. For the "spirituality" of Miss Cather's latest books consists chiefly of an irritated exclusion of those elements of modern life with which she will not cope. The particular affirmation of the verities which Miss Cather makes requires that the "furniture" be thrown out, that the social and political facts be disregarded; the spiritual life cannot support the intrusion of all the facts the mind can supply. The unspeakable Joubert, the extreme type of the verity-seeker, says in one of his *pensées:* " 'I'm hungry, I'm cold, help me!' Here is material for a good deed but not for a good work of art." Miss Cather, too, is irked by the intrusion of "physical sensations" in the novel.

Miss Cather's later books are pervaded by the air of a brooding ancient wisdom, but if we examine her mystical concern with pots and pans, it does not seem much more than an oblique defense of gentility or very far from the gaudy domesticity of bourgeois accumulation glorified in The Woman's Home Companion. And with it goes a culture-snobbery and even a caste-snobbery. The Willa Cather of the older days shared the old racial democracy of the West. It is strange to find the Willa Cather of the present talking about "the adopted American," the young man of German, Jewish or Scandinavian descent who can never appreciate Sarah Orne Jewett and for whom American English can never be more than a means of communicating ideas: "It is surface speech: he clicks the words out as a bank clerk clicks out silver when you ask for change. For him the language has no emotional roots." This is indeed the gentility of Katherine Fullerton Gerould, and in large part the result, one suspects, of what Parrington calls "the inferiority complex of the frontier mind before the old and established."

Yet the place to look for the full implications of a writer's philosophy is in the esthetic of his work. "Lucy Gayheart" shows to the full the effect of Miss Cather's point of view. It has always been a personal failure of her talent that prevented her from involving her people in truly dramatic rela-

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tions with each other. (Her women, for example, always stand in the mother or daughter relation to men; they are never truly lovers.) But at least once upon a time her people were involved in a dramatic relation with themselves or with their environments, whereas now "Lucy Gayheart" has not even this involvement. Environment does not exist, fate springs from nothing save chance; the characters are unattached to anything save their dreams. The novel has been *démeublé* indeed; but life without its furniture is strangely bare. LIONEL TRILLING.

The last article in this series of Revaluations—a discussion of Upton Sinclair by Robert Cantwell—will be followed by a final comment from Malcolm Cowley.—THE EDITORS.

Scavengers of the Flood

AS THIS is written, the lower Mississippi levee system is still intact. But if it fails in the next day or so, the blame will lie primarily with a group of land sharks and cross-roads politicians in Arkansas and Louisiana who have prevented flood-control works from being built. There is no reason of any sort why the lower Mississippi should not today be wholly safe. The fact that great areas are being momentarily threatened with inundation is due almost entirely to the fatty degeneration of our traditional politics.

In 1927, ten years ago, the Mississippi was in flood. Along its lower course, thousands of tons of black, boiling river water flung themselves at point after point of the levee face, and clawed and tore at its surface. Again and again the flood broke through, and shot out over the quiet countryside behind the levee, wrecking all that it touched. Two hundred people died, 700,000 were made homeless and there was property damage of $200,000,000.

The 1927 flood shocked the country. Mr. Hoover, then the Great Engineer, called for a permanent remedy, and you may recall the newsreel shots of him at that time, wearing hip boots and perched in the bow of a flat-bottomed rowboat, brooding over endless acres of ruin. The United States army engineers were commanded to draft a plan. Six months later, the so-called Jadwin report was published, named after Major-General Edgar Jadwin, then Chief of Engineers. With the horror of the flood still vividly upon the nation, the substance of the Jadwin report was enacted into law, and approximately $350,000,000 authorized to carry out its provisions, an amount that has subsequently been increased to more than $600,000,000.

Oracularly, the Jadwin report began: "Man must not try to restrict the Mississippi River too much in extreme floods. The river will break any plan which does this," and for the most part was concerned with the existing river-bank levees. It contained, however, a number of important new proposals, one of which was the Boeuf Basin floodway. This was a plan for an alternative channel for Mississippi waters in time of flood. The Boeuf River runs roughly parallel to the Mississippi from a point just south of the Arkansas River to the Tensas Basin at the mouth of the Red River, and is shut away from the Mississippi by a low ridge. Under the Jadwin plan, so-called land levees (levees built on normally dry land in anticipation of flood) were to be erected on either side of the Boeuf, creating a gigantic walled trough perhaps two hundred miles long. When the Mississippi rose to a level endangering its own levees, the Boeuf floodway was to come into use, holding the Mississippi proper to a safe height. From the Tensas Basin, another set of land levees along the Atchafalaya River were proposed to carry the flood on to the Gulf of Mexico. Besides the Boeuf and Atchafalaya floodways, the Jadwin report provided for two other important projects: the so-called New Madrid setback, across the Mississippi from Cairo, at the mouth of the Ohio, and the Bonnet Carré floodway, some fifty miles above New Orleans.

It is perhaps worth pointing out what the Jadwin plan did not undertake. It did nothing, and pretended to do nothing, with the question of long-range land use, which is the fundamental problem in flood control, and one with which Mr. Roosevelt is now attempting to deal by soil conservation and reforestation. The Jadwin report likewise specifically rejected, as too costly, proposals for establishing reservoirs at the sources of the Mississippi's tributaries, another fundamental matter, essential for the economic exploitation of our water resources. But what the report did do, and do thoroughly and competently, was to propose means by which the greatest imaginable Mississippi flood could be carried harmlessly to the Gulf. Had the Jadwin plan been carried out in full, the United States army and the Red Cross would not now be standing by prepared to evacuate half a million people in the Mississippi Valley, and fears of devastation and epidemic would be groundless.

In the ten years since the Jadwin report, the New Madrid setback has been built. The business men of Cairo, the city it was designed to protect, saw to it that it was. The Bonnet Carré floodway is finished, and the floodway of the Atchafalaya, under pressure from the business men of New Orleans. But with the middle link of the system, the Boeuf floodway, the pressures were quite different. Instead of urban property to be protected, there were speculative land values to be reaped, and, as

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it happened, the speculators fell to quarreling among themselves. Not only has not a day's work been done on the Boeuf floodway, but the project itself has been abandoned. It is this failure that imperils the whole Mississippi control system.

The men from whom we may learn why the Boeuf floodway has not been built are the harassed Congressmen from the lower Mississippi states. In the act of 1927, it was arranged that owners of property within the land levees of the floodways were to be compensated by lump-sum payments. To the cracker-box politicians of Arkansas and Louisiana this seemed a crevasse by which they hoped to worm their way into the Treasury. Even before the 1927 act was signed, they were riding through the Boeuf valley, taking options on land that would be needed by the government. Much of this land, it should be said, was tangled swamp, and it is estimated that at least 40 percent was entirely worthless, except to pry money out of Washington.

The United States army engineers found easements to the Boeuf floodway were to be had only at bandits' prices. It was not long, moreover, before a still graver difficulty appeared. The Boeuf River lobby in Washington was matched by another and increasingly potent group from the valley of the Eudora River, which parallels both the Boeuf and the Mississippi, and provides an alternative floodway site. Month after month the two lobbies fought silently and bitterly. The break came when Major-General Jadwin retired as Chief of Engineers, and Major-General Markham took his place. In due course there appeared the Markham report, recommending that the Boeuf floodway be abandoned, and the Eudora floodway adopted in its place. Last June, Senator Overton of Louisiana, colleague of the late Huey Long, succeeded in having the Markham report enacted as an amendment to the 1927 law. At the time of its passage, the leader of the Eudora lobby is reported to have complacently informed one of his congressional acquaintances that he then held options on twenty thousand acres of Eudora valley land.

Members of Congress from the lower Mississippi now await the counter-attack of the River Boeufites. After the record of the last ten years, few of them think that either floodway can ever be built while the question is a political graft center. Last week, as the Mississippi rose in sudden might, Representative Miller of Arkansas introduced a bill to create an Arkansas Valleys Authority, modeled almost word for word on the act that created the TVA. Only in some such way as this, I think, can the Mississippi flood problem be solved. Good as Mr. Miller's bill is, the plan of Senator Norris for an overriding Mississippi Valley Authority is the solution ultimately to be hoped for. The present flood has caught us with our political sins unshriven, but the flood of 1947 need never happen.

Washington. JONATHAN MITCHELL.

Confessions of a Gadgeteer

I'M A PUSHOVER for gadgets. Let anybody put on the market a new electric razor, parlor popcorn popper, potbellied automobile with the engine in some queer place, three-way pillow, electrically driven self-thinking typewriter or non-writing fountain pen, and I rush to be among the first to have it, if it is within my slender means. If it is not, I go and stand outside the salesroom with my nose against the pane, giving a pitiful exhibition of middle-aged American infantilism of a sort guaranteed to turn any European green with nausea. When I cannot buy, or look at, new and gimcrack devices, I read about them. I am the most faithful subscriber to all those curious publications devoted to the interests of the American handyman, whose covers invariably portray in four colors a vast flying hotel just coming to rest on the mid-Atlantic waters.

Time was when I was more than faintly ashamed of this secret passion for unspillable inkwells, silent alarm-clocks and automatic cigarette lighting-and-smoking devices, but two things have cheered me up. The first was when I went to Soviet Russia, which many people regard as the world's future now made flesh, and discovered that the best, the most admired people there were also gadgeteers, many of them in a stage more advanced than mine. They believe, I found, in man's conquest over nature, in mechanical progress as the most important part of that conquest and in new inventions and devices as valuable parts of the useful whole. Oddly enough, I also discovered a similar trend when I went through the museums of early American household equipment. The Founding Fathers were great hands at thinking up useful little gadgets to make the tasks of the home easier. Such a man as Thomas Jefferson, whose house is practically a solid mass of ingenious tricks of his own invention, was not unique as might be supposed, but in the sound line of an old tradition.

My present purpose is not, then, to apologize for a defect in my character but, on the contrary, to complain that the society in which I live caters to my weakness so little and so badly. I could, if pressed, give quite a list of gadgets waiting, like the characters in Maeterlinck's forgotten play, to be born. More important, from my point of view, is the list of devices already in use in some other part of the world, but not here; those invented but held off the market for one reason or another, and those theoretically available but actually beyond my reach and that of the majority of people. Space does not per-

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mit an extensive catalogue in each of these divisions, but a few examples may serve.

There is in existence in Europe a traffic light which so far as I am aware is unknown in the United States and seems to me markedly superior to our devices. Below the main green or red light, there is a short chain of four or five small lighted bulbs which go out, one by one, beginning at the bottom, at equal intervals while the light above is burning red or green. Thus the motorist or pedestrian arriving at an intersection can tell at a glance just how long it will be before the light changes, and whether it is safe to start across the intersection. The merit of such a device needs no argument; yet my pessimistic and prophetic soul tells me it will be ten years at least before it is in general use in this country.

Some other inventions which I am told are entirely practical and are in use in various places in Europe are attachments for the telephone. One of these tells you, if you call someone who is out, at what hour he will return, by sounding a gong. Another is a phonograph device by which you can dictate a message, to which the absent telephonee listens when he returns to his domicile. In Europe, a gadget is in use which tells the time over the telephone by means of simple automatic machinery; but in the United States, I think I am correct in saying that this is not being done by any telephone company. Girls are still employed for this painfully monotonous task. In this country, a similar machine is in use in one or two cities, installed by advertisers (the Coca Cola Company and the Merchants' National Bank of Mobile, Alabama) and the telephone subscriber gets a few words of advertising patter in addition to his report on the time.

In Sweden, I learn from Science Service, you can call a specified number and get a report on the weather conditions of the next day or so. This report is given mechanically, the sound records being changed every few hours to bring the information up to date. From the same source I learn that in Stockholm you can call a taxi by telephone and, under normal circumstances, get one in a few minutes. All the taxis in the city have united in a common service and your call is automatically transferred, by machinery, to the station nearest to your home.

It is just thirty years ago that I read about a remarkable new type of phonograph which records and reproduces sound electromagnetically on a steel tape. Its advantages, I was then told, were several: the quality of the recording did not deteriorate with the passage of time, yet the tape could be wiped clean like a slate by passing a magnet over it and be used again and again, thousands of times. So far as I know, nothing was ever done about this until within the past two or three years. Nowadays several great European newspapers are employing specially built examples of it to record, over the long-distance telephone, the dispatches dictated by their foreign correspondents. If what I have been told is true, this invention should have made obsolete, many years ago, all our present phonographs and dictating machines; but, on the contrary, it is not available to the average consumer at all.

An invention that is curiously laggard in reaching the public is the slow-playing phonograph record. Years ago it was announced that devices had been perfected through which an entire symphony could be placed on one side of a single disc; but try to buy one, or a phonograph equipped to use it! The only device of this sort now available is the "talking book" produced only for the blind, and on a semi-charitable basis. It is true that records play longer than they formerly did, but they are very far from living up to the ballyhoo, and it is my own opinion that those on sale have not caught up to technological progress.

An excellent example of the lag between technology and its application will be found, I predict, in what is popularly known as polaroid glass. We are now killing about 38,500 persons annually in automobile accidents, many of them at night, and a large part of these because of dazzle from the glare of approaching headlights. With polaroid used both on the approaching car and in your own windshield, it is authoritatively said that dazzle entirely disappears. Yet it is safe to assume that years will elapse before such equipment is made universal on new cars, or compulsory on old ones, through the law that is clearly necessary.

On this list I might include a modest invention of my own, made many years ago—a large mirror erected on a diagonal at a blind intersection between two roads, so that a motorist coming from one side can see who is approaching from the other. Someone else also thought of this device, and it is in use in certain places in Great Britain; but most or all of the blind intersections in this country are still without it, and in cases where the community cannot afford a traffic officer or a light, we go on killing people at a rate that is needlessly high.

Half a decade ago, the marvel of the Sunday newspaper was the photoelectric cell, which accomplished miracles in counting objects on a moving belt, in rejecting defective products and, particularly, in the automatic opening of doors before pedestrians or vehicles. I am not in a position to speak about its use in industry, but as one who gets about over the United States a great deal, I can testify that as a door-opening device, it is practically non-existent. Of the last thousand heavy doors through which I have laboriously pushed in Washington, New York, Boston, Albany, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Kansas City, San Francisco, Los Angeles and points intermediate, just about two have employed this simple, convenient and on the whole inexpensive device. I am told that I am unfair in this statement, that there are now many installations both for public and private use; but my own experience is as stated.

Sometimes, of course, it is mere general apathy that prevents an invention from spreading as rapidly as it might. This may be true of some of the European devices described above, and is almost cer-

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tainly so of the advanced automobile design in which the engine is in the rear, the running boards abolished, the storage battery made accessible and a car changed from the closed to the open type in a moment by compressed air. In Norway, a new rig for small sailboats has been devised, so superior to ours that it will presumably sweep the world in a few decades; but it hasn't yet done so. Thousands of Europeans, when they turn out to watch a ceremonial procession, carry small portable periscopes which would be equally useful to American crowds but are unknown here.

If small tables such as are used in restaurants were made with three legs instead of four, it would be impossible for them to tilt back and forth; but I never find any such tables in my own dining out.

Everyone I have ever asked (and I have devoted practically my entire life to this research) is uncomfortable on the high stools placed in front of the counters at soda fountains and in quick-lunch restaurants; yet the proprietors of such establishments rarely install the low counters and chairs that are just as practical from their own point of view.

In England, I have used an excellent pocket postal scale, operated by gravity without the use of springs; yet I have never been able to find one in the United States. And so on.

Occasionally, a new invention is held back because of the fear of protests from the labor it would displace. An example of this is the teletypesetter, which has now been in daily use on a small scale for several years. Through it, one man operating one keyboard in New York City, for example, could set the type on an Associated Press dispatch simultaneously in 1,000—or any other number—of newspaper offices throughout the country. Eventually, this is sure to come; but the problem of unemployment it would create in a highly skilled, highly organized craft is so huge that we can hardly blame the publishers for quailing before it. Because of this or other obstacles, we do not yet have such devices as the self-justifying typewriter, which produces lines of equal length, permitting a photographed printing plate; or the radio facsimile machine, which could print a newspaper in your home overnight.

What are the things that stand between me and the multiplicity of gadgets for which my addiction craves? I have always supposed that the chief obstacle was the inertia of private business, which, with its eye mainly on making money, hesitates to scrap expensive existing machinery, and perhaps lose the money already spent on advertising, merely to serve the public safety or convenience. Competent authorities tell me that I am wrong in my supposition, and that cases like this are excessively few. They admit there is sometimes a lag, but they insist that in the long run the superior invention wins.

The American patent system, it is obvious, was prepared to meet a social condition that no longer exists. When it was established, the standard situation was that an individual invented something, and began to manufacture and sell his product. If people liked it he made money; but in any case, the government recognized his rights of ownership for seventeen years. But today many of the important and successful inventions are not of this type. They do not result from an individual's bright idea, but come from painstaking research begun for a given purpose. The inventor is likely to be a salaried employee of a great corporation, who has signed away all rights in anything he may produce, or a worker in medical research who, under the ethics of his profession, makes his discovery immediately available, without remuneration, to the world. I think all informed authorities will agree that if an individual nowadays, without large wealth behind him, attempts to follow the old pattern and put on the market an invention of his own, in competition with large corporations, he is almost certain to fail.

I am advised that an aspect of this matter gravely in need of attention is the vast patent pools that have grown up in recent years. Through these pools, a small number of the largest corporations in any industry "cross-license" one another for the use of inventions developed by any employee, or group of employees, of one of them. This makes possible virtually monopolistic practices that would be forbidden by the Sherman law if the same result were achieved in some other way. It also creates a situation where the private inventor, outside the charmed circle, finds it practically hopeless to proceed.

Perhaps a useful beginning would be made if the government really did protect the owner of a patent. At the present time it does nothing of the sort; infringements are considered no concern of Washington, and the inventor, no matter how good his patent may be, is left to fight it out in the courts, which he may or may not be able to afford.

Probably I should say at this point what most people already know: that my fellow gadgeteers in Soviet Russia have had a hard time in obtaining for household use the sort of devices I have been describing. The chief reasons for this have been two: Soviet Russia had to improvise a machine technology in a country where it was almost entirely lacking; and she has been forced by the threat of war from East and West to apportion a huge amount of her national income to military purposes. If war does not come, I think we shall see, in a few years' time, what might be described as a Gadgeteers' Paradise. I do not mean that every new invention will at once cause all existing plant in the same field to be scrapped. A lag is inevitable. We shall not, however, see what I have been talking about: useful devices withheld, millions spent to persuade people to do things the wrong way, or to refrain from doing certain things at all, or to do other things that have no place in an ordered and civilized society, all to the glory of somebody's pocketbook. When that day comes, if my own country is still unreformed and unrepentant, I hope I may be made at least a corresponding member of the Grand Order of Gadgeteers of the USSR. BRUCE BLIVEN.

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Washington Notes

The Liberal Bloc in Congress—A Leader Lost, A Leader Needed—Senator Lundeen and Representative Bernard

THE LEFT-WINGERS in Congress now have the appurtenances of a formal political party. They have a chairman, Mr. Gerald J. Boileau of Wisconsin; a secretary, Mr. Charles G. Binderup of Nebraska, and an executive committee of five members. Since the session opened, they have been holding regular meetings behind closed doors, at which the party line has been hammered out. Their name for themselves is the Liberal bloc—"Liberal" having been chosen as a sort of umbrella word beneath which Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, Farmer-Laborites and American Labor Party members can all squat in amity.

Nothing really new ever happens in the House of Representatives. The Liberal bloc is a conscious revival of Mr. LaGuardia's Progressive bloc, which flourished under the Hoover administration, just as Mr. LaGuardia's bloc was a revival of the bloc that fought Uncle Joe Cannon. It is reported that Mr. LaGuardia helped in the formation of the present House group.

The five members of the Liberal bloc's executive committee are Messrs. William Lemke, Martin L. Sweeney, Knute Hill, Gardner R. Withrow and Paul John Kvale. Mr. Lemke's prestige has suffered from the walloping he took last November. Temporarily at least, he seems to be in the Liberal bloc's doghouse. Mr. Sweeney is another ex-pal of Father Coughlin and Dr. Townsend, and his glamor is likewise frayed around the edges. However, in last year's campaign, Mr. Sweeney succeeded in beating the Gongwer Democratic machine in his home city, Cleveland, and is now a boss in his own right.

Of the remaining members of the executive committee, Mr. Hill represents the radicals of the state of Washington, is an advocate of public control of the utility industry and has been one of the chief defenders of the Bonneville Dam development. Mr. Withrow and Mr. Kvale represent the Progressive Party of Wisconsin and the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, respectively.

For the present, the members of the Liberal bloc can hardly do more than sit around their campfire, burnishing their arms. They are enveloped by the Mr. Roosevelt who was revealed in the inaugural speech of week before last. Right now Mr. Roosevelt is more popular in their own congressional districts than they are themselves. As long as he directs the policy of his administration towards bringing justice to the third of the country's inhabitants who are ill fed, ill clothed and ill housed, they are bound to follow loyally behind him. If, later on in the session, Mr. Roosevelt should feel compelled to compromise with the reactionaries of his own party, the Liberal bloc is organized and equipped to fight as an independent column on the left of the New Deal battle line.

As the nucleus of a new national political party, the Liberal bloc has two definite weaknesses. It suffers, unquestionably, from sectionalism. Of its forty-odd members, all but a handful are from the Northwest and the Pacific Coast. There are Congressmen from the East who are as radically minded as any of those in the Liberal bloc, but they seem to have little inclination to join with a group dominated by Western agrarians. The Liberal bloc contains not a single Southerner. This is especially to be regretted, since, during the coming debate on the Bankhead farm-tenancy bill, an alliance between the West and South would be of great value.

The second weakness of the Liberal bloc concerns its leadership. In any popular movement, it is almost essential to have a leader who can serve as an easily understood symbol of the movement's aims. Mr. Boileau, the present leader of the Liberal bloc, is an excellent parliamentary strategist, but he has not yet shown the characteristics needed in the building of a popular hero. Mr. Maury Maverick of Texas has the sort of colorful personality that is required, but he is a Southerner.

The most influential leader of the Liberal bloc, in my opinion, is not a living man at all, but Governor Floyd B. Olson, who died last fall. Had he lived, Mr. Olson would have come to the Senate with the present session, and might easily have brought about a profound realignment in contemporary politics. Certainly no one else had greater natural gifts for the leadership of a third-party movement. In the outer office of Mr. Ernest Lundeen, who holds the Senate seat that Mr. Olson would have had, there hangs a life-sized photograph of Olson. Mr. John Toussaint Bernard, the first-term Congressman who three weeks ago challenged the extension of the neutrality act to Spain, exhibits a candid-camera photograph of Olson, and explains that it was a special gift. On Bernard's desk stands a gilded plaster statuette of Olson. Throughout the Minnesota Farmer-Labor delegation, and to a scarcely lesser extent throughout the whole Liberal bloc, Olson is still a living presence.

The ultimate future of the Liberal bloc depends, in part, on the development of a national spokesman of Olson's caliber. Simply because he is in the Senate, the likeliest candidate is perhaps Mr. Lundeen. The Senate offers great opportunities for catching and holding the attention of the country, as Mr. Arthur H. Vandenberg and Mr. Huey P. Long, in their several ways, have recently demonstrated. It must be said that Mr. Lundeen has the reputation among his former colleagues of the House of being difficult to work with. However, as far as I can learn, this reputation rests largely on his advocacy of the so-called Lundeen social-security bill, which, among the endorsements of many other organizations, had that of the Communist Party. The Lundeen bill greatly embarrassed the more timid of Mr. Lundeen's left-wing comrades. They did not want to vote against it, and they were mortally afraid of being accused of communism. Lundeen didn't care. He thought the bill was a good one, and pushed it with dogged political courage. If he has luck, it is possible that Mr. Lundeen may become a national figure before the present session ends.

The newcomer, Mr. Bernard, seems to be another man of exceptional political courage. He made his objection to the extension of the neutrality act only after his Minnesota and Wisconsin colleagues had circumspectly declined to put themselves in the position of opposing Mr. Roosevelt's wishes, and had warned Bernard against doing so. Bernard, however, decided it was wrong to deny arms to the Spanish

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republic, and announced that he would oppose the extension whether anyone else did or not. A Corsican by birth, and a former iron-mine worker and city fireman, he has a fine voice, made to reëcho among the House galleries, together with a gift for oratorical phrases, and it is easy to predict that he will be heard from.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

How About a Billion-Dollar U. S. Loan to Hitler? —Of Course It's Illegal—But It Would Please the British

A STRANGE story comes from Washington. This has been, as you may have noticed, an era of strange stories. But no stranger one has floated over the wires.

The story is that English visitors to the United States are now interested in persuading American financiers and the American government *to lend a billion dollars to Hitler.* That, you say, is as fantastic as the tale which has come to us daily from that Russian courtroom in Moscow where Radek and fifteen others tossed their lives into the ash-barrel. How can we credit such things in Russia? we say. What makes men behave so? This is an attempt to plumb the mysterious psychology of the oriental conspirator—a closed area to us. But, let me ask you, may not an oriental conspirator ask with the same bafflement, what makes Americans toss their millions and billions around the way they do?

Do you recall the hundred-million-dollar loan to Germany after the War? The Literary Digest, I believe, sent out a questionnaire to a hundred experts in finance asking if they believed the American people would lend a hundred millions to Germany. This was when the War was fresh in memory, when Germany's default was also fresh, when she was prostrate. Everyone replied that such a loan was not possible—everyone but two, one of them, as I recall, Dr. Max Winkler, who said that not only was such a loan possible but it would actually be made. It was made. It is now in a kind of default, as we shall see later.

About the time of that hundred-million-dollar loan I had the following experience. A high court in Germany had held after the War that industrial or corporate bonds, while payable in marks, which were then worthless, were entitled to be redeemed to the extent of 15 percent in gold value. Holders of imperial German bonds promptly filed suit to have the same ruling applied to the government bonds. One day The New York Times carried a dispatch from Berlin reporting a decision by the German high court that this rule would not apply to government bonds—in other words, they were utterly repudiated.

That day I got a wire from a Cincinnati newspaper asking me to wire them a full account of the effect of the decision on these bonds, as Cincinnati has a very large German population. I went into Wall Street to a large investment house specializing in German bonds. There I saw at least 300 people on the sidewalk clamoring to get into the office. The offices were jammed. When I made my way through I asked a partner in the firm if these were angry Germans clamoring for news about their defaulted German bonds. "No, indeed," he laughed, "these are Germans clamoring for some of the new hundred-million-dollar issue."

And so it is not at all impossible that a huge bond issue will be offered here, that the American government will wink at it and that the eternal American boob with the unplumbable occidental psychology will buy them.

The story is that England is fostering this loan. I do not know whether this is true or not, but I know that England is fostering something. When Sir Arthur Salter visits us we may be sure he is coming with some neatly packaged economic rationalization to smooth the way for some British adventure. But now we have Sir Arthur Salter coming and Sir Otto Niemeyer, Sir George Paish and Walter Runciman have all been here—the four horsemen of British economic propaganda.

It is said that England wants, above all else, to keep Germany quiet for at least another year. Mr. John Gunther, writing in The Saturday Evening Post, says England's strategy is in four sections, one of them under Anthony Eden, and his job is to manage the European situation in order to postpone war as long as possible to give England time to be prepared. Hitler's direst need now is money. He must have it from some source. He has importuned England. But England can't supply it. She has needs of her own. Therefore if America can be induced to make a "conciliation" or "good will" or "peace" loan—be sure a pretty name will be invented for it—Hitler can be kept off the battlefield for a year, thus giving England time to mass her own armaments.

Against all this there are some little difficulties here. There is the Johnson law, for one. Some question is raised as to whether this law covers the German government's default. But there need be no doubt on that point. The law plainly outlaws a German loan while Germany's debt is in default. There is the record of the German loans in this country. There is the hundred-million-dollar loan. For some mysterious reason the Hamburg-American Line is buying the interest coupons on that loan. The coupons call for seven percent. The Hamburg-American line is buying them for five percent. This is a default of two percent of the interest. The sinking fund is in default.

There are other German loans. All are in default. That is, interest payments are made to a bureau of the Reichbank (Bureau of Foreign Debts). The payments are made in marks. They are impounded. Americans cannot recover them, use them or withdraw them. One or two small loans are excepted from this because the corporations had assets in this country which creditors might reach. Then there is the little matter of our Senate. And, of course, the supposedly overwhelming feeling of the American people.

All this means that it would take a little time to put such a loan over. The various knighted economists, who are supposed to know more than American economists, will explain the matter to our American gentry. Presently the propaganda—or education—will begin to flow about and presently, in some inexplicable way—who knows?—we may see psychology, laws, Senators all change and the next thing we know a great loan will be floated, "to preserve the peace of the world," buttressed by certain splendid agreements and under the guarantee that "all the money shall be spent in American factories on American goods and American workmen."

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Eternal Reinhardt

The Eternal Road, by Franz Werfel. Play translated by Ludwig Lewisohn and American stage adaptation by William A. Drake. Score by Kurt Weill. Dances arranged by Benjamin Zemach. Manhattan Opera House, January 7, 1937.

IT IS to be expected, as a part of human weakness if nothing else, that when a race sets itself apart, draws a special line as its definition among other people, these people should, intermittently at least, hate and assault it. It is not surprising, therefore, that Hecataeus of Abdera, a Greek living in Egypt, around 300 B.C., should without malevolence say that the Jews under Moses' teaching had "an inhospitable and inhuman manner of life," which in the ancient societies meant something much more serious than the words now may imply. Nor are we surprised when Manetho, thirty years later, settles the whole business of this Jewish population as lepers, outcast Egyptians, half-savage Bedouins, and reasserts their vice of unsociability, following Moses' prohibition of "any dealings with anyone whatsoever except their confederates." Pliny, centuries later, was speaking of them as a race full of insults to the gods, which was merely the repetition of one of the ancient Greek characterizations of the Hebrews.

Though hard things said about the Jews continued, it would be a mistake to take such attacks too much as special; since all around the Mediterranean the divers races, in a manner not wholly ancient, were calling one another names. Nevertheless there were proscriptions enough against the Jews in classic times, however, paralleled now and then, one is glad to note, by the Jews themselves, whose Palestinian history is not without savagery and slaughter, sometimes of foreigners, sometimes of whole villages of a differing sect nearby. Later on we shall have the terrific four centuries of Jewish persecution, beginning with the First Crusade. And finally during the last few years comes the series of European events so much to the Jews' disadvantage.

The core of all this, for our present purposes, is to note the fine starting point it affords for this drama of "The Eternal Road." In a room in the synagogue, at the bottom of that superb stage lay-out that Mr. Norman Bel Geddes has designed for the play's visual body, a company of Jews have assembled, fled thither to escape the mob outside. This is the old story of the persecution and exile and wandering, timeless, a part almost of the race. Any knowledge of that story will show how it is intense, sometimes fanatical, and always of the stuff from which arises passionate legend. Their rabbi reads to this desperate crowd in the synagogue pages from the sacred history; the curtain above rises; a wandering land appears; and then in episode after episode are shown the histories, one story after another, one leader after another. A slight love story emerges from the congregation: a young Gentile woman follows into this danger and isolation the man she loves; and by way of comment and solution we get the story of Ruth—a bit sweetened from some of its original folk touches.

For the most part, however, this progression in the upper parts of the stage concerns the great names, those who have led their people out of tribulations, toward God.

The dramatist's idea here has wonderful implications and possibilities, this dream of life as one continuous line, the great dead, the living need of them, their presence. The idea has many classic ramifications. In Athens there were shrines to heroes, as Thucydides records. Aristotle, of the scientific bent, dedicated an altar to Plato; and the blunt Diogenes declared that Plato's soul took rank among the deathless gods. Even as political-philosophic theory this motif had a place. "If," Aristotle says in the "Politics," "there exists in a state an individual so preëminent in virtue that neither the virtue nor political capacity of all the other citizens is comparable with his," he should be regarded as not at all a member of the state. "For he will be wronged if treated as an equal, when he is thus unequal in virtue and political capacity. Such a man should be rated as a god among men." There had been the Greek heroes, there were later the *Manes* of the Romans, and long afterward the saints of the Church. It is these saints that Israel's figures, Moses, Joseph and the rest, are most like. But they are to be seen as more intense, more powerful in their leadership and myth, and as more directly under the very voice of their God, by whom the decisions of their souls are shaken, and in whom their souls' violence finds response. Around these shining figures the Jews in that synagogue can rally through religious and racial sentiment, since they cannot do so through national sentiment.

The idea in Werfel's play, that in the midst of persecution and wandering, this people can turn to its great heroes —almost the friends of God as it were—ends in the beautiful motif of a little boy who has seen those bright forms, those wandering shadows of his race, and hears even the voice of the Messiah speaking to him out of them. His heart is fresh, all the centuries are but one morning in his heart; and then suddenly the mob violence strikes across that; the wandering of his people begins again. And meanwhile we have yet the sense of the dream; it began at the first and is strangely deathless; it is indeed unique in kind in the world. It reminds us of that remark of Varro, Cicero's friend, which St. Augustine refers to: that the Jews were, among others, a people whose imageless cult still maintained what others had abandoned.

Essentially this Werfel story is austere in outline and is burning inwardly. Mr. Geddes' décor provides a variably imaginative sequence of planes, surfaces, lightings. Against the lofty sky, sometimes night, sometimes one or another hour of the day, the figures and groups of the many players are disposed and varied. Distinct accessories are introduced: an Egyptian façade, a desert tent, a well, a field of wheat, and so on. Upon this stage Mr. Max Reinhardt has devised the procedure of the play-spectacle. A good many of the scenes promise well, such, for instance, as that moment when Moses stands far up, with the tablets of the law. Even such scenes, however, are apt to develop into the inconsequent; and the trivial, elaborated and tasteless appears where imagination and dramatic images are required. Take for example the scene of the Egyptian bondage, the bondsmen hauling at the obelisk, the overlords above, the more or less chorus below. You cannot take as tragic anything so involved and foolish as a forestage of half-naked young ladies rhythmically handing bricks to one another, while to the side there are maidens with duplicate baskets weaving, while another young person, in a lustrous wig,

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sings trivially a bit of bondage song; and presently on the levels above there will be leapings, or just have been—what difference could it make?

Worst of all, the last curtain, end of the performance, is inexcusable, the whole company setting off on the eternal road via the footlights, the angels out taking bows, and Mr. Geddes' fine synagogue scene garishly exposed like empty chicken crates.

The dances, created by Mr. Benjamin Zemach, a fine artist, are such as must be perfect or else are mere plugging about, plus some jiggling, which they mostly were. Mr. Geddes' costumes in the main lacked drama and lacked style, as indeed the whole occasion did. Either more stylization or a more simple and realistic intensity is needed if the enterprise is to be much more than a vapid and profuse spectacle, punctuated by a few fine moments and many momentary promises of splendor sadly unfulfilled.

The speech of the synagogue congregation might vary as you please, but for the great figures of time and the world's dream an English more uniform than we hear at the Manhattan would be desirable. Mr. Kurt Weill's score was in itself often dramatically expressive, at times beautiful. All in all we might take as an example of what was at least possible to this moving drama that scene where Boaz comes and lies down smiling, singing his lovely song, by the sheaves in his field, under the stars. It is beautiful, with that pure and single effect that in any art the thing has when it is right. To ask such quality of the whole production would be of course to ask imagination, and choiceness, and sincerity. These we have a right to demand rather than expect, though line after line remembered from the great Hebrew poetry of the Bible tells us what we seek, and leaves us astonished at so much confused intention—half vision, half vulgarity—and expert engineering as Mr. Reinhardt's enterprise exhibits. STARK YOUNG.

The Bandwagon

Unlike so many women who see in themselves nothing more than a logical, biological necessity, Princess von Bismarck is charmingly excited at being a woman.—*Article in The London, England, Sunday Times.*

If Yale professors did not have freedom of speech, Irving Fisher could not have remained at Yale so long.—*Dr. James R. Angell, president of Yale University, in an interview published in The St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

Some have noted, and it is certainly not without significance, that on the very day that the film ["The Green Pastures"] was first shown to the public the Crystal Palace was burnt down.—*The (English) Christian Herald and Signs of Our Times.*

The Nazi publication, Schwarze Korps, entered the controversy over the Jewish origin of Christ today with an attack on artists who depict Him with emphatically Jewish features.—*From a Berlin dispatch to The New York Post.*

HARK, HARK, THE LARK!

I believe that all Europe and most of the world is on the verge of a "turning upside down." We must get back to fundamental values. I think that America, too, will feel repercussions from the boiling social pot of Europe. We all need to get a little closer to nature; that is why I am getting back to simple things like farming.—*Miss Grace Moore, in an interview published in The Chicago Daily News.*

RED CROSS NEED NOT BOTHER

Epidemic Rages in Louisville. Mirror Rushes Relief.—*All the headline material on the first page of The New York Daily Mirror for January 27.*

NO ONE TO DINNER?

A busy day . . . yesterday. . . . Seven hundred and ten persons lunched here and 2,700 came to tea after the [inaugural] parade was over.—*Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt in her syndicated column, "My Day."*

IN VINO VENERIS

Italians were warned by the semi-official Giornale d'Italia today not to taper off their wine drinking lest there be a corresponding decrease in the birth rate.

Describing wine as "a moderately exciting beverage" which "creates happy abandonment that favors accentuation of the phenonema essential to vitality," the newspaper pointed out that the birth rate is lowest in countries where wine is not the national drink.—*From a Rome dispatch to The Portland, Ore., Daily Journal.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

A COMMUNICATION

The Constitutional Issue

SIR: It is a continuing source of surprise to me how many Americans talk as if the Constitution would be a pretty satisfactory document if only something could be done about the judicial veto. As a matter of fact, some of the features of the Constitution which make it least satisfactory as the instrument for governing an efficient democracy, economic as well as political, are deeply embedded in the document itself. For instance, there is the ever present threat of a deadlock between the President and Congress which conceivably might last through a whole term without any solution, except under circumstances that would permit Congress to impeach the Executive, or the far more probable circumstance of a skillful use of patronage and organized public pressure by the President on Congress.

There is the more serious danger that our present unsatisfactory two-party system is made all but invulnerable by our undemocratic method of electing a President. I have listened with amazement to discussions of the almost certain rise of a farmer-labor party which quite ignore the constitutional situation. The President and the Vice President to be elected must receive the majority of the votes in the Electoral College. It could easily happen that this electoral majority would be chosen by a popular minority properly distributed in the right states. But that is not the worst of it. If no candidate for President has a clear majority in the Electoral College, the election is thrown into the House

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of Representatives, where each state has one vote. One for New York and one for Nevada. Fear of this result was a powerful argument against voting for La Follette in 1924, and for Lemke in 1936. It was even used to dissuade men and women from voting for me in 1932! The situation presents a very high hurdle indeed in the path of any rising third party. And to make matters still worse, the right of any new party or minority party to get its national candidates on the ballot is dependent on the caprice of forty-eight state legislatures, which yearly make the process more difficult. And the right to vote for President of the United States at all is still abridged by state laws embodying racial prejudice. This serious situation can be changed by an amendment providing for the direct election of the President and Vice President of the United States, and uniform federal laws governing the right of parties to a place on the ballot, and of citizens to vote, at least for the Chief Executive of the nation. This matter is potentially, at least, as important as the issue of the judicial veto.

I have long held that one of the early tasks of a worthwhile coöperative commonwealth would be to provide itself with a new and appropriate Constitution. But to write that document the United States is far from ready. We should immensely improve our situation and do much toward making democracy constitutional—as today it is not—by three amendments. One of them is the amendment I have already discussed providing for the direct election of the President.

The second, which is perhaps the most desirable of all, would provide an easier way to amend the Constitution, one under which the legislatures of thirteen states, with a total population less than that of New York, could not forever block the processes of change. No one has yet seriously proposed such an amendment in any definite form. Yet with it to aid us we could face with some equanimity the judicial veto and the possibility of a deadlock between the legislative and executive branches of the government.

These changes are in no way affected by the power of the Supreme Court. Moreover the judicial veto over Congress could be denied altogether, or greatly curbed, without removing the restrictions on desirable social and economic legislation inherent in those state and property rights which by common belief are written into the Constitution and its Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. There is something naïve and not quite honest about the assumption that Congress, unchecked by the Court, can and will adopt any legislation that its majority may deem desirable. All the members of Congress, and the President who must approve its bills, take an oath to support the Constitution. They will continue to take that oath seriously. It is certain that conservative or reactionary forces will not stop their appeal to the Constitution simply because Congress and the President must judge for themselves what are the constitutional limits of their power to legislate for the well-being of the nation. It requires no great imagination to foresee the day when some new Huey Long of Louisiana, or abler Talmadge of Georgia, backed openly or secretly by powerful economic interests, could challenge some drastic extension of federal power on which no court could pass, in the name of the protection that the plain meaning of the Constitution gives to the sovereign state of Louisiana, or Georgia, or what have you.

These are the reasons why it is highly desirable that the issues in the field of social and economic legislation so impressively put before us in Thomas Reed Powell's article, "The Next Four Years: the Constitution" (The New Republic, January 13, 1937), should be settled by my third amendment: a positive grant of power to Congress to adopt legislation which it deems good for the American people in the economic and social fields, or at least in those of finance, agriculture, industry and labor. These vital problems of our day are essentially national.

It is no argument against the earnest and intelligent advocacy of such an amendment that the chance of its immediate passage is very poor. The campaign for it will be enormously educational and might actually further rather than hinder the passage of an amendment to curb the power of the Court—an amendment that would not necessarily be inconsistent with the more desirable positive grant of power to Congress. The whole purpose of the Farmers' and Workers' Rights Amendment, drafted in its original form by Morris Hillquit at the request of the Socialist Party, and introduced at the last Congress in somewhat revised form by Senator Benson and Representative Marcantonio, was to confer specific power on Congress for all needful economic and social legislation. Doubtless the amendment must be strengthened in its wording, especially in relation to the just-compensation and due-process-of-law clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments as they have been interpreted. I find it difficult to accept the argument that the courts, so long as they are allowed any power of judicial review, will be able to nullify such an amendment.

If nothing can be done without stripping the Supreme Court of power, then I should favor a clear-cut denial of that power rather than a provision that the judicial veto may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of Congress. Among other objections to this latter device is the fact that the courts would probably not accept defeat in a particular law as setting a precedent. They might keep on nullifying legislation, not all of which could be passed over their veto. The resultant confusion of the legal pattern would be extraordinary.

One reason why we should hesitate under existing conditions in America to strip the courts of all power to review congressional and state legislation is the fact that to a limited extent the courts have granted some real protection to civil liberties. Witness the unanimous decision in the Oregon criminal-syndicalism case. No probable congressional action could or would give the individual equivalent protection. I am far more concerned, now and for the future, with protecting those civil liberties upon which all hope of orderly progress and the genuinely good life depend, than with any dogma of congressional supremacy. These civil rights rest on a basis that is very different from, and far more valid than, any property rights in our changing society. This consideration gives added weight to my plea that if possible our present undemocratic, and potentially very dangerous, system of judicial supremacy should be corrected by specific grant of necessary powers in the economic and social fields to the Congress of the United States rather than by a blanket abolition of the judicial veto. At least this matter deserves a degree of examination and discussion that it has not yet received from would-be reformers of the Constitution.

New York City. NORMAN THOMAS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

[The extracts printed below give a fair picture of the letters dealing with Edmund Wilson's attack on the literary left and Malcolm Cowley's answer. But some letters on both sides were more violent and lent force to a point on which Wilson and Cowley agreed—that there is too much Russian factionalism in this country.—THE EDITORS.]

The Wilson-Cowley Line-up

SIR: I think Mr. Cowley rather misses Mr. Wilson's meaning for the term "Stalinism" [*The New Republic, January 20*] though he rightly understands Mr. Wilson's use of it as more derogatory than not. Perhaps if he will recall that the name of Max Eastman appeared in the "Twenty-fifth Anniversary Number" of *The New Masses* only once, and then as the object of a brief attack by Mike Gold, he will see Mr. Wilson's meaning more clearly.

Princeton, N. J. STUART GERRY BROWN.

SIR: . . . There seems to be no possible benefit to be derived in the publication of articles as politically biased as Wilson's. It serves only to confuse issues and waste what is otherwise space well filled. *Thanks, then, for Malcolm Cowley's swell reply.*

New York City. ABNER GREEN.

SIR: Hurray for Wilson's article! And hurray for your courage in publishing it. You still maintain some honest liberalism despite your mushy attitude now that the Stalinists (C.P. Third International) find themselves reformers too—but not honest ones. . . .

I like Cowley for his "Exile's Return" and attempts at clarity—but he is in the dismal fog of the enemy of socialism—the present dictator of the USSR.

Dorchester, Mass. E. B. MICHELSON.

SIR: I have read the two articles by Wilson and Cowley and wish to congratulate Mr. Cowley on his very eloquent plea for tolerance and unity. I hope Krutch, Freeman, Wilson and many others study it carefully.

Woonsocket, R. I. P. S. TAYLOR.

SIR: . . . Well, Mr. Wilson asked for it. Ever since he devoured Trotsky's big book a few years ago, he has been growing more and more obsessed, like Mr. Villard and Mr. Krutch, with the notion that Trotsky has been vastly mistreated by that demon, Stalin; and his trip to the USSR last summer only confirmed him in that view. . . .

South Haven, Mich. WATSON NICHOLSON.

SIR: . . . When Mr. Wilson says that "there is no sense in pursuing a literary career under the impression that one is operating a bombing plane," he oversimplifies. It is true, as he says, that "one must work in good faith in one's field," but the writer's field is unusually broad. His peculiar function as an interpreter of human and social experience to his fellow men makes him a kind of bombing-plane operator, whether he realizes it or not. Mr. Wilson, for example, has dropped several bombs himself in this article—not, however, on the enemy at the gates of Madrid, but rather on the rear lines of the defenders, I would judge. . . .

Lone Wolf, Okla. CLYDE O. HUNTER.

SIR: . . . In the same issue you print without comment articles and reviews ranging from those by well known sympathizers of the Communist Party, through liberals such as Charles A. Beard and John T. Flynn, to Pearl Buck's lament for the "loss" of an ultra-reactionary theologian. On the other hand, confronted with an article criticizing Stalin and Stalinism—albeit from a literary and not a political point of view (the grounds upon which Mr. Wilson claims you are "non-factional")—you print it only in connection with a point-by-point reply immediately following. . . .

Wilton, Conn. ADELAIDE WALKER.

Than Whom

SIR: In The New Republic of January 27:

> "Who, then, does Dr. Quinn admire?"
> (Sic) queries Mr. Bernard Smith.
> Spew out declension's tasteless pith?
> Accusatives, into the fire!

Philadelphia, Pa. TOUCHSTONE WOOD.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

A protest against our criticism of Governor A. B. Chandler of Kentucky for not pardoning the Harlan County miners comes from Edward F. Prichard Jr., of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. Prichard says that Governor Chandler has a good record in regard to labor, and that his refusal of pardons for those miners not previously pardoned by former Governor Ruby Laffoon was not final, but that he asked them to bring a more complete case to him.

The San Francisco Chapter of the Inter-Professional Association sends us a unanimous resolution condemning the action of Mayor Rossi in requesting the participation of Italian military planes in the Golden Gate Bridge celebration.

From Henry G. Babcock of White Plains, New York, comes a copy of his letter to the President, asking him to say that he intends to do something to stop the aggression of Germany and Italy in Spain.

In regard to Malcolm Cowley's review of Plekhanov's "Art and Society," H. Oppenheim of New York City writes that the essay first appeared in English under the title "Art and Social Life" in Literature of the World Revolution (now International Literature), numbers 2 and 3, 1931.

Our editorial, "Shipping Arms to Spain," in The New Republic for January 13, draws the comment from Lydia Dierks of St. Paul, Minnesota, that it is unneutral of us to wish the government to allow the Spanish government to buy arms here and make their own arrangements for shipment. "Let us now stay out of European conflicts—forever and completely," she pleads.

The sit-down strike is a revolutionary development in the labor movement, writes Otto McFeely of Oak Park, Illinois, since it challenges the legal conception of the holiness of ownership, and is a step up from the slave weapon of the walk-out strike.

What's on the Air?

Demonstration of new-type airplane direction finder and static-proof antenna, designed to eliminate one of the major causes of accidents in blind flying, as broadcast from a transcontinental plane approaching Los Angeles. Saturday, February 6, 5 P.M., CBS.

Pope Pius, from Rome, is scheduled to pronounce a blessing upon the Eucharistic Congress in Manila, which is to be broadcast in America over both the Columbia and NBC networks at 8 A.M. on Sunday, February 7.

Dr. Thomas Alexander, Dr. John Taylor and others participate in the American Education Forum on the subject, "How New College Trains Teachers of Tomorrow." Monday, February 8, 2 to 2:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

The National Farm and Home Hour presents speakers from the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land Grant Colleges to consider the question "Are Farmers to Become Tenants or Owners?" Thursday, February 11, 12:30 to 1:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Norman Thomas speaks on the subject, "What Next for the Sharecropper?" Wednesday, February 19, 10:30 P.M., CBS.

Senator Ernest Lundeen of Minnesota, Dr. Isador Lubin, commissioner of Labor Statistics, and others discuss "The Right to Earn the American Standard of Living" on the People's Lobby program. Saturday, February 13, 10 to 11 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Lady into Fox

EUROPE in the later sixteenth century was subjected as never before to what John Knox denounced as "the monstrous regiment of women." Elizabeth of England, Mary of Scotland, Catherine of France were the centers of forces which dominated the Continent. About each of the three there is something enigmatic, which in the case of the first two has challenged the acumen of many biographers. Catherine de' Medici has been the subject of voluminous execration, but for a critical biography in English she has waited nearly four centuries. She is the most baffling character of the three. Mary of Scotland offers an example of headlong action at variance with thought; Elizabeth, one of thought delaying but finally fulfilling itself in action. Catherine, according to Mr. Roeder's penetrating analysis,[1] is an instance of thought becoming sterile and losing the name of action. "Vibrating in tense vacillation she focused the whole complex of influences and connected and foiled them. . . . The central figure on whom every influence converged, from whom every impulse radiated, and who was its passive pivot, was constitutionally incapable of action. She had always been governed by events, she had never determined them. She was the medium of life, not its master."

Mr. Roeder is profound in his analysis of Catherine's character; he is no less so in his interpretation of the social and political background against which she stands. Her personal defense is the extraordinary web of circumstances in which she was entangled. The daughter of the diseased and dying house of Medici; married at fourteen to the second son of the King of France, soon to become the Dauphin; threatened with divorce because of the sterility which she circumvented, according to legend, by having intercourse during menstruation; compelled to act the complacent wife before the dominating mistress, Diane de Poitiers; left a widow to act as regent for twenty years during the minority of two of her sons, and to confront an intermittent civil war waged on religious grounds; forced to defend her own status against such rivals as the Guises, the Bourbons, Montmorency, Condé, Coligny, and to maneuver the ship of state through a tortuous channel of foreign policy with danger on every hand—Philip in Spain, Elizabeth in England, William of Orange in the Netherlands and John Calvin in Geneva—she won through a complex of difficulties such as history records of no other woman, in which the mere fact of survival became an achievement.

Interwoven with the biography of Catherine in Mr. Roeder's skillful design is the Huguenot struggle in France, "the lost revolution." Here he follows the school of Weber and Tawney in emphasizing the economic side of the Reformation. As the movement in France gained force "it became more difficult to distinguish between the religious and the political Protestant." The Huguenot represented the modern tendency toward freedom in trade as well as in thought, the challenge of the rising middle class to feudal suppression. On the other hand stood the Roman Church in its historic alliance with reaction. "The necessity of defending by force an indefensible system on which the survival of a privileged class depends was the opportunity which called forth in the sixteenth century a Loyola. The church was on the defensive, and its success as the champion of a sick and sanctified social order was one of the morbid symptoms of its decay."

For fifteen years, marked by eight civil wars and as many hollow truces, Catherine balanced her way between the two religious parties. The Catholic extremists were led by the Dukes of Guise, father and son, and the Cardinal of Lorraine. The Huguenot leader was Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France. The House of Lorraine was ambitious to supplant the dying Valois on the throne, the more eager because the legitimate succession would pass to the Protestant Bourbons. In the Catholic League, which the Guises formed, Catherine recognized greater danger to her family than in the Huguenots. Herself a secularist, she saw in religion only a cloak for secular interests. She could therefore promise toleration with no qualms of conscience. Her personal connections, however, were all with the Catholic powers and parties. A Medici was grand duke of Florence; Philip of Spain was her son-in-law. Toward the Guises she was drawn by a mothlike fascination. Mr. Roeder's keen analysis finds in her repulsion from the forthright admiral and her inclination toward the subtle cardinal one of the elements of the tragedy.

The massacre of Saint Bartholomew was, in Mr. Roeder's view, the product of inaction, not of consciously directed force. In the immediate glow of Catholic congratulation which caused the Pope to swear that the event caused him more pleasure than fifty victories over the Turks, there was every disposition to claim credit for a premeditated enterprise. Mr. Roeder follows the account written later by Henri of Anjou, afterward Henri III. Catherine and he were both alarmed at the influence Coligny had acquired over the weak mind of the king. They arranged with Guise to have the admiral assassinated, but the arquebus only wounded him. Catherine had plotted too often against his life to believe in the possibility of another reconciliation, but the Huguenots were now on guard and the only way to reach him was by a general attack. Working on the king's fears of a Huguenot rising, she obtained his authorization of the massacre, and the Duke of Guise led his armed forces to Coligny's lodging. Even then Catherine and Henri of Anjou sent a message recalling the command, but it arrived too late; the duke had accomplished the assassination and loosed the Paris mob. Mr. Roeder accepts the view reported by the Spanish ambassador that if Coligny had been killed at the first attempt, no general massacre would have occurred—"all the rest was inspired by circumstances." Thus the great action of her life, for which she competes in villainy with her eminent fellow countrymen, Machiavelli and Cesare Borgia, was merely the play of forces that had become too strong for her genius of compromise, evasion, temporizing. When circumstances compelled her to act, "she reacted in the only possible way for a negative nature—by a blind act of destruction."

Mr. Roeder has made a portrait of Catherine de' Medici, one worthy to stand beside the best of those of her rival queens. He has given a clear and brilliant history of a period unequaled for complication and confusion among leaders and forces. And he has treated his theme in the light of modern developments. The "lost revolution" anticipated in

[1] Catherine de' Medici and the Lost Revolution, by Ralph Roeder. New York: The Viking Press. 629 pages. $3.75.

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its underlying conditions and alignment of forces the authentic French Revolution two hundred years later. There was the weakness of the monarchy, the bankruptcy of the kingdom groaning under ruinous taxation and the assembling of the States General as a last resort, the rising power of the middle class animated by a new religion and ideas of freedom necessary to its practice. One source of weakness was the division among the Protestants between Lutheran and Calvinist. Mr. Roeder must be thinking of recurring symptoms when he writes of "the intolerance of one Revolutionary school for another, the doctrinaire jealousies, the parochial spirit of the emancipators of mankind." The chief cause of failure was the lack of leadership. John Calvin, with all his theological and ecclesiastical boldness, was a political coward, and steadily advised obedience to a law that deprived his followers of the right of worship. Above all, the two forces against the monarchy, the Huguenots and the Catholic League, canceled each other out. The way for Henri of Navarre was cleared by Henri III by his assassination of the Duke of Guise, and the Huguenot prince ascended the throne as a Catholic king, whose minister Sully revived the monarchy that Richelieu, Mazarin and Colbert raised to the first place in Europe. Did they perchance recognize the "tireless industry of indecision," and "the resources of negation," by which Catherine held the positive forces at bay and gave them their opportunity?

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The "It" Lady Herself

Romantic Adventure: The Autobiography of Elinor Glyn. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 357 pages. $3.50.

"IN LOOKING back at my life," Elinor Glyn says, "I see that the dominant interest, in fact the fundamental impulse behind every action has been the desire for ROMANCE. Romance may be rare but it is the only thing worth having." The author of "Three Weeks" and "His Hour" is often guilty of oversimplification, but never of inconsistency. From her earliest childhood, in the 70's in Canada and the Island of Jersey, through the 90's, the World War, and the period she terms "the last three years of comparative quiet," Elinor Sutherland Glyn never lost sight of her goal. She was born into a family whose emigration to Canada only served to exaggerate its original bonds with the English and French aristocracies. She was the daughter of a young engineer, but soon made a cult of *noblesse oblige* and the few individuals left to practise it. To a public that still remembers the fantastic English lords, duchesses and "tiger queens" of her early novels, as well as those gifted with It whom she later introduced as typical of American life, it would appear that Mrs. Glyn had not seen much of the world—which was not true. "Romantic Adventure" is the surprisingly witty chronicle of a much traveled lady who knew Russia under the "poor Emperor," whose spelling was the despair of Lord Curzon, and who was a good friend of that Encyclopedia of Knowledge Arthur Brisbane and "that most perfect host" William Randolph Hearst.

In describing her personal romantic adventures, Mrs. Glyn adheres to the familiar style of various grand duchesses and ex-queens, and it is only when she ventures into the economic, social and literary fields that she begins to write exactly like Lorelei Lee. Between gasps, one realizes that Mrs. Glyn is the only living writer who sees the future happiness of the world in "the elevation of all mankind to the rank of princes and princesses in a fairy kingdom."

MARGARET FROHNKNECHT.

Behind the Lines in Spain

Behind the Spanish Barricades, by John Langdon-Davies. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. 283 pages, illustrated. $2.75.

JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES' book on the Spanish civil war is easily the most interesting of the half-dozen volumes so far published on the subject. He has done, although a little haphazardly, what other special correspondents covering the loyalist side of the war should have done long ago; that is, leave Madrid for a week or so to the Associated Press and the United Press and take a look at the new Spanish village. I want to know if the loyalists have recaptured the Clinical Hospital in University City or have gained a part of the Cerro de Los Angeles, but the news agencies are quite competent to tell me such things. In the meantime I should like to know just what has happened to the old villages, so often organized along feudal lines.

Mr. Langdon-Davies, who is familiar with Catalonia and who speaks Catalan as well as Castilian, stopped at numerous Catalan and Spanish villages on his way from the French border to Barcelona, Madrid and Toledo to cover the war for The London News-Chronicle. He takes some time off in his book to tell how these villages changed during the first month of the revolt and I am grateful to him for that. But he didn't spend half enough time there.

He went through rural Spain when the first flush of excitement of putting down the fascist uprising was still felt. Popular Front committees, with anarchists apparently in the majority almost everywhere, had taken charge and were already beginning to plan a future. They had had scarcely enough time in August, however, to carry out their programs of production and service. I, for one, would like to know what has happened in the intervening six months.

The book is largely the narrative of the author's last trip through war-torn Spain, embroidered here and there with a flash-back of previous trips and carrying the theme of the many personal tragedies inherent in a civil war. He has many friends who finally made the choice of fighting on the rebel side, but like virtually all Englishmen and Americans who have known and loved Spain, Mr. Langdon-Davies is stanchly for the people and against the Church, the absentee landlords and the military. He is ever scornful of Britain's non-intervention policy and at the end of the book he sets out to convince the average man in England and America of the righteousness of the loyalist cause.

"The incontrovertible primary fact is, that on July 18, 1936, a legal, democratically elected government was attacked by a small group of rebel military officers, aided by a few thousand fascists largely representing the absentee-landlord class, and helped by the church hierarchy who, as the clerical party, had so powerfully influenced politics in the *ancien regime*," is the way the author sums up the start of the war. It has been my experience, when trying to convince conservative Americans that the loyalists deserve their sympathy, that they prefer to overlook the start of the war and to point rather at the revolution that has been going on within loyalist Spain since the revolt started. They instinctively hate the results of that revolution more than they hate the idea of the fascist armed revolt. Mr. Langdon-Davies is, indeed, a poor propagandist, for at the end of a book dealing largely with the results of a proletarian revolution he makes a plea for Spanish democracy. Those who think they are for bourgeois democracy but who are scared by the very thought of a proletarian revolution will not be comforted by the book.

ROBERT NEVILLE.

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The Latest Puritan

The Late George Apley: A Novel in the Form of a Memoir, by John P. Marquand. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

MR. MARQUAND'S novel parodies the commissioned biography of a Boston trustee. Shortly after George Apley died in 1933 at the age of sixty-seven, his son hired Mr. Willing, an old friend of the family and a professional man of polite letters, to write a life of his father. Mr. Willing accepted the task with some reluctance, as the son did not want the conventional whitewash job but insisted on the inclusion of certain indiscreet documents. By using the son in this way, as a *deus ex machina,* Mr. Marquand sacrifices the art of pure satire to the higher cause of truth.

George Apley's grandfather came of British yeoman stock and made his fortune in the slave trade; his father transferred his capital to textiles; George devoted himself to conserving the accumulations of his ancestors. He attended a private school with the children of other families like his own. All the boys went to Harvard together, belonged to the same club, attended the same parties, married the frights they had first met in their perambulators. Meanwhile George's parents were warning him vaguely against sex and, specifically, against friendships with people other than his own kind. Once he slipped badly and fell in love with an Irish girl. His parents hustled him abroad to get over it and he returned, heavy-hearted, to marry a plain, rich Bostonian whose parents were even more proud and possessive than his own. In later life he found solace by taking platonic "bird walks" with the wife of one of his friends.

Having no head for business George became a trustee and devoted much of his time to charitable institutions. He felt little enthusiasm for his work until the World War brought mounting profits to the Apley Mills and made him abominate Wilson and adore the British. During the 1920's his hatred of prohibition led him to buy liquor from bootleggers as a matter of principle (he had an ample cellar); he also disliked censorship of books and plays but warmly approved of the Sacco-Vanzetti execution. Near the end of his life he made a fool of himself trying to expose a ring of blackmailers, but dropped the case at the instance of his youthful Irish love. He got out of the stock market well before the crash and advised his children to follow the family practice of reinvesting half their income and dividing the rest between charity and living expenses. George Apley never in the least conformed to the Veblen pattern of conspicuous waste.

Mr. Marquand's story depicts that section of Boston—that section of State Street, even—which is devoted to the preservation rather than the acquisition of property. George Apley comes into no contact with any Boston dissenters, he does not even move in those higher State Street circles which encourage the Irish Catholics to assume political leadership while they retain a stranglehold on the banks. Property determines his behavior as rigidly as Karl Marx says it should. To safeguard their property, the Apleys keep a solid family front toward the rest of State Street, just as all the State Street families keep a solid social front toward the rest of Boston and the world at large. On literature and liquor George Apley permitted himself to hold liberal views; on the more serious problems of labor and sex he did not compromise. Yet, as Mr. Marquand presents him, George Apley is a human being, poignant in his frustration, and the little world that he and his kind have made is reproduced here in such accurate detail that its bitterness can be more easily endured between covers than in real life.

QUINCY HOWE.

The Sense of the Past

Not Under Forty, by Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 147 pages. $2.

MISS Cather's little book must be the saddest of fall reveries. Elegiacally and sentimentally, it commemorates the past, the immediate Victorian past, tranquil and traditional, bookish and complacent and, looking around now, she finds little enough left of it. "The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts, and the persons and prejudices recalled in these sketches slid back into yesterday's seven thousand years." Flaubert's niece, the Caroline of the Letters, a very old lady when Miss Cather met her by chance at Aix-les-Bains, has her great moments when Turgenev's name is mentioned and she can say with a sigh, "Ah, yes, I knew him well at one time," and continue, "my uncle also was a man of letters, Gustave Flaubert, you may perhaps know. . . ." Mrs. Fields (the widow of James T. Fields, of Fields and Ticknor, publishers, of Boston) reclines in her widow's lavender on a green sofa directly under the portrait of Dickens and reads Arnold's "Tristan and Iseult" and Miss Sarah Orne Jewett exclaims that she didn't believe the poem had been read aloud in the Charles Street house since Matthew Arnold himself had read it there. Mrs. Fields had talked to Leigh Hunt of Shelley, heard of Keats from Severn, entertained Dickens, Thackeray, Arnold, Salvini, Modjeska, Booth, Longfellow,

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Emerson, Whittier, Hawthorne—as Miss Cather says "the list sounds like something in a schoolbook." They belong with the past, their sympathies lay with their elders, and Miss Cather's sympathies lie with them.

Nothing of great importance is said on either side. The tone of regret, the delicate tinting, the affectionate memory is all. A stray murmur from Mrs. Fields, awaking from a long reverie, seems just right: "You know, my dear, I think we sometimes forget how much we owe to Dryden's prefaces," and the murmur hangs there, timeless and incontrovertible, with no argument to spoil its cryptic finality. It is the Victorian world, in its domestic interior and on its best behavior, seen through the tender memories of niece and widow, hushed and reverential, "the peace of the past where the tawdry and cheap have been eliminated and the enduring things have taken their proper, happy places."

An indirect glimpse of Katherine Mansfield makes the most critically interesting of the six essays. A New Englander of taste and good sense had delighted in her as a child. Years later he read one of her stories, " 'artificial and unpleasantly hysterical' [he said], 'full of affectations; she had none as a child.' He spoke rather bitterly: his disappointment was genuine." Miss Cather pays an elaborate tribute to Miss Mansfield's art, but the New Englander may stick longer in our mind. A long, sympathetic review of Mann's "Joseph and His Brethren" is included as looking sufficiently backward for Miss Cather. But the slight general essay on "The Novel Démeublé" is disappointing: it reminds us how much more critically, alertly and intelligently Mrs. Woolf had done the same thing—the protest against materialism in the novel—in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (published in 1924, but then Mrs. Woolf's English world had changed "on or about December, 1910"). Miss Cather is happiest with her memories of the past and better in praise than in blame, and she almost persuades that not to be born after 1890 was the best of fortune.

PETER MONRO JACK.

A Marxist Psychology

Psychology and the Social Order: An Introduction to the Dynamic Study of Social Fields, by J. F. Brown. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. 541 pages. $3.50.

THERE is a neat dialectic irony in the fact that the present hefty volume should have been written by a professor of Psychology in the University of Kansas; home state of two presidential candidates: the Republican Tory Landon and the Communist revolutionary, Earl Browder. Because here, within the compass of some 500 humorless, pedestrian and often repetitious pages, Karl Marx joins hands with psychology. Starting from the "field-theoretical" assumptions implicit in the Gestalt theory and further developed by Professor K. Lewin, Professor Brown attempts to integrate all basic problems of human behavior with the various "social fields" (group, nation, church, class) to whose complex interacting influences even the most powerful and original personalities are subject.

Such attempts are by no means new in psychology and social psychology, and were this book confined to general abstract considerations the orthodox would be let off with a few vaguely uncomfortable thrills. But Professor Brown, after some 300 pages of forthright—and very solemn—elaboration of his main thesis (that a person's "membership-character" is fundamental not only to his beliefs but also to his actions and much of his "personality"), launches into a "political science section" which turns out to be an extremely cogent analysis of our present social confusions, as shown in the parallel developments of fascism and communism alongside a rapidly weakening "bourgeois-democratic" State. Quite definitely the author accepts the challenge of dialectical materialism as his own independent researches have shown it to be applicable to psychology; so far from resenting the possible charge of indulging in "propaganda," he "admits an anti-fascist bias, because it is daily more obvious that fascism is anti-scientific." Some of our Marxists may not like Professor Brown's references to Leon Trotsky and Sidney Hook, nor his confusion of communist with fascist dictatorships (a confusion later qualified). But even by them, such "deviations" will be forgiven in the case of a man whose attempt to formulate a genuinely scientific and revolutionary psychology is made with open acknowledgment to the work of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

HAROLD WARD.

Hopeless Journey

Migration and Economic Opportunity: The Report of the Study of Population Redistribution, by Carter Goodrich and Associates. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 780 pages. $5.

Internal Migration in the United States, by C. Warren Thornthwaite. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 62 pages. $1.

Migration and Planes of Living: 1920-34, by Carter Goodrich, Bushrod W. Allin and Marion Hayes. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 119 pages. $1.

Is Industry Decentralizing? by Daniel B. Creamer. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 117 pages. $1.

Concentration and Scatter in the Mineral Industries, by Frederick C. Tryon. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 110 pages. $1.

TAKING as their task a study of "the problems of those fractions of the existing [American] population whose movement might be thought desirable and necessary," and organizing the material around the "central theme" of the "relationship between migration and economic opportunity," Professor Carter Goodrich and his associates have produced a series of bulletins and a comprehensive report that for richness of material, ingenuity in handling data, and general all-around fruitfulness in usable results are among the very best jobs of their kind in recent years. Although the study was suggested by problems posed by the depression, it was clearly recognized that they really originated in the economic history of the nation in times past. In brief, the associated scholars made a study of population in relation to job opportunities as a prelude to the formulation of a policy of population movement.

While the natural resources on which jobs ultimately rest are present in America in abundance, the institutional barriers to their availability are the key to the problem. "The doubtful question, therefore, is one of social organization and of our capacity to organize industrial society on the present or some other basis . . . the analysis has shown that we cannot make recommendations regarding the placement of population without coming to terms with these issues." Again, "But no possible placement of people could make them safe in an insecure economy, and no migration policy can itself guarantee the indispensable increases in economic opportunity."

Unlike so many glib thinkers who feel much the same way about the matter, the authors are not content to let

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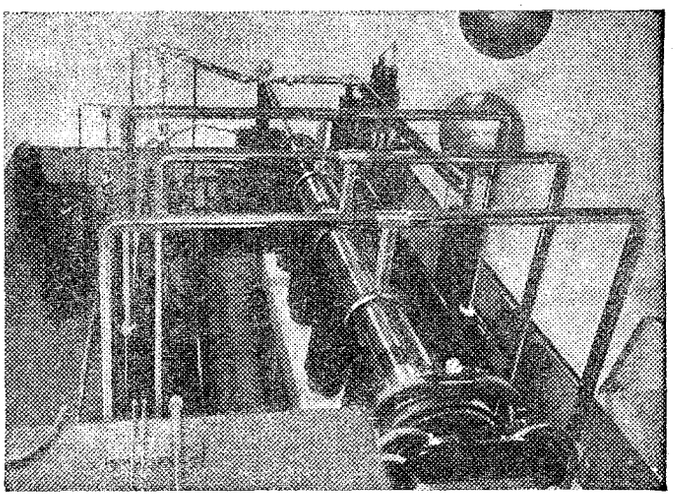
the situation rest on mere negative statements of a pessimistic nature. They have rather chosen to put into the bulletins and the report a mass of material which can be described as follows:

1. An analysis of the distribution of the usufructs of American capitalism by regions (although with an incidental recognition that there is another and perhaps more significant distribution along class lines), in an attempt to discriminate as to the areas of economic strength and weakness.
2. A discussion of conditions in the four outstanding problem areas of the United States, the Southern Appalachian Coal Plateaus, the Old Cotton Belt, the Lake States Cutover Region and the Great Plains (drought country), all important centers of population excesses and (in the South) of abnormal population increases.
3. An account of the changing distribution of fundamental resources, leading to the conclusions that, except in certain fields like oil, there is no great likelihood that new resources of consequence will be found in the United States; that the shifts in the future will be dictated by exhaustion of known resources and the greatest exhaustion factor will be in the matter of the soil destroyed by erosion; and that as a consequence of all this, the expansion of job opportunities, if any, will come in urban areas.
4. A fascinating discussion of the location of industry, emphasizing the concentration of American industrial activities in 200 counties, the fact that there is no evidence at hand which indicates that industry will expand much outside the counties in which it is at present located, thus blasting the pretensions of the advocates of industrial decentralization (though there is a tendency for industry to diffuse within the present areas of concentration).
5. A long account of "The Changing Demand for Man-Power" is exceedingly pessimistic in total effect, for it plainly says that agriculture and mining must give up workers in large numbers, while industry and the associated service and professional occupations do not promise to expand at a rate that will make it possible to transfer the excesses of workers in the former into the latter.
6. An interesting presentation of activities in the field of planned migration in the USSR, Germany and Great Britain, and a critique of American measures (resettlement so-called) which not only undercuts the ideology of the American administrators but severely criticizes the results thus far achieved for their futility.

In short, anyone who wants to understand the structure of American employment opportunities in the past and the future cannot ignore these bulletins and the report. While fertile in suggested expedients for short-term adjustments, the study clearly points to the conclusion that we have reached a place in American history where planned or unplanned migration cannot *solve* anything, though it may get people now sunk in hopeless poverty into surroundings where they can live with somewhat greater ease on their relief checks. Recovery under capitalism means the resumption of expansion, and thousands of words in these publications have no other meaning than that the era of striking, startling, mass job-creation in America is pretty much over. The choice is either "adjusting" the population to the capitalist economy—which means among other things the bringing into existence of a large peasantry engaged in subsistence agriculture—or discovering and realizing through political action a new institutional pattern that will allow the dynamic forces, which are described, to find full play.

C. Hartley Grattan.



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The City Wife

The Invaders, by Stuart David Engstrand. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

"THE INVADERS" is a story of modern farm problems. Beginning with the more or less personal conflict of a young farmer and the wife he brings from town, it leads up to the larger conflict between the farmers' union and the cannery that buys their produce. The fact that the book is written with gravity and straightforward sincerity gives a certain value to the novel that it might otherwise lack, and keeps the curiously stilted conversation and melodramatic situations from becoming ludicrous. The characters move as symbolic representatives of types and forces, and are not individuals. The young wife Miriam is particularly inconsistent, and none achieves much normal reality. If it was the author's intention to paint the present situation of farm life at the point of change in more or less general terms—flat figures moving against a prepared background—he has not wholly succeeded even in this. The somewhat incredible personal affairs are not particularly moving, and one reads (with undeniable interest) not to find out what these people are going to do themselves, but what the author is going to do *with* them. There is a calm simplicity in the prose, and the descriptions of farm life and of natural things are sometimes beautifully done and very sensitive. Nor has Mr. Engstrand fumbled in stating the problem of the farmers and their union. But the book is marred by incidents that tread too narrowly on being ridiculous, and by the speech of his own characters, who neither create a credible world of their own nor quite exist in this one. Stuart Engstrand could be a very good writer, but in "The Invaders" he has not written a good book—and this is regrettable because the material was worth while and the author is evidently sensitive and sincere.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON.

Contributors

HARRY L. HOPKINS, federal relief administrator since 1933, was formerly director of the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association. His book, "Spending to Save," was published last fall.

LIONEL TRILLING is a member of the English department of Columbia University and a contributor of criticism to the reviews. He has written the introduction to the Modern Library edition of three of Eugene O'Neill's plays, which will be published this month.

NORMAN THOMAS is a member of the national executive committee of the Socialist Party of America and several times has been the Party's candidate for President. His most recent book is "After the New Deal, What?"

MARGARET FROHNKNECHT, who works for the Book Union, is a contributor to The New Republic and The New Masses.

ROBERT NEVILLE, a member of the staff of The New York Herald Tribune, was in Spain when the present rebellion broke out.

QUINCY HOWE, an editor for the publishing house of Simon and Schuster, is himself a Beacon Hill Bostonian. He is just completing two short books—one "A Handbook of World Politics," the other a study of Anglo-American relations.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN left for Australia last fall on a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to travel and do research for a book. His latest volume, "Preface to Chaos," a study of war in the modern world, was published last fall.

PETER MONRO JACK has taught in various universities here and in England and has contributed to many book-reviewing journals.

HAROLD WARD is interested in the sciences primarily from the point of view of what they can be made to do for society at large. He is a frequent contributor to The New Republic, The Living Age and The New Masses.

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON, author of "Now in November" and "Winter Orchard," has finished a new novel, "Jordanstown," which will be published this month by Simon and Schuster.

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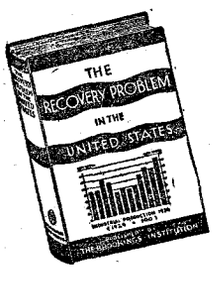

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